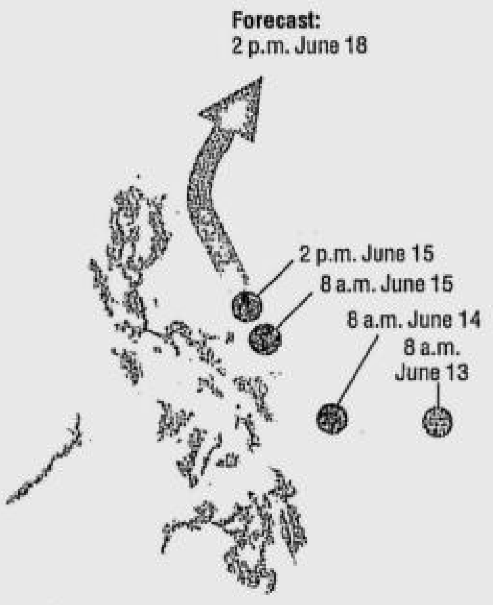
Veteran broadcaster Alingod is new press secretary

Story on PAGE A19

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, June 16, 2003 ★★ 80 pages / 8 sections / vol. 18 / no. 188 P15 website: www.inq7.net



TRACK of tropical storm "Egay"

'Egay' downs power lines, brings floods to Samar

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau
and PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

EVEN without hitting land, tropical storm "Egay" toppled power lines, flooded many parts of Samar and Leyte, and stranded passengers at ports in Albay and Sorsogon yesterday.

With maximum sustained winds of 85 km per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 100 kph, Egay (international name: Soudelor) was estimated at 140 km east northeast of Virac, Catanduanes, as of 10 a.m. yesterday. It was moving north-northwest at 19 kph.

The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) in Eastern Visayas said power interruptions were reported in Biliran, Samar, and the entire Northern Samar capital town of Catarman.

At the Matnog and Pilar ports in Sorsogon, more than 1,000 passengers bound for Samar and other islands in the Visayas have been stranded since Saturday. About 500 passengers going to Catanduanes have also been stuck at the port of Tabaco City.

By 10 a.m. today, the storm is expected to be 280 km northeast of Casiguran in Aurora and 340 km south-southeast of Basco, Batanes, according to Antonio Arispe of the weather bureau office in Legazpi City.

In Biliran, more than 100 people were forced to leave their houses due to the swelling of waters, according to a disaster official.

Adriano Fuego, OCD regional chief

'EGAY'/A17

2 top MILF leaders elude gov't troops

Salamat says he's willing to act as chief negotiator

PRAYERS FOR BISHOP
Members of the Catholic charismatic group El Shaddai express support for their spiritual adviser, Bishop Teodoro Bacani, who is being accused of sexually harassing his secretary, during a prayer rally in Sucat, Parañaque City.
RANDY HORMILLOSA

By Edwin O. Fernandez
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—If his presence in the peace talks is the key to peace, then MILF founder Salamat Hashim would be willing to serve as the rebel group's chief negotiator.

Ghazali Jaafar, political affairs chief of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, told dxMS radio station here that Salamat was willing to act as chief MILF negotiator "if this is the key to a political, comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the Mindanao problem."

But hopes raised by this new peace overture—a direct response to a Palace proposal—were somewhat dampened when Jaafar himself and another senior MILF leader were the targets of a government raid at noon yesterday.

Jaafar and Murad Ebrahim escaped arrest when policemen and soldiers raided their homes in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, after they had already left, a military report said.

Murad is the MILF head of military affairs and chief peace negotiator.

Three caretakers of the raided houses were taken in for questioning but were later allowed to go home, the military added.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the raid "shows that the government is not sincere in talking peace with the MILF." It would have an impact on the stalled peace talks, he added, but gave assurances that the MILF's unilateral ceasefire would still hold.

In his radio interview, Jaafar said he personally saw no need

2 TOP/A19

Gawad Kalinga houses sprout in slum areas

By Dona Pazzibugan

IN JUST three years, a civic community-building program has helped build 6,000 houses in various slum areas in the country.

Now, Gawad Kalinga is aiming to build half a million homes in the next five years.

Won't the volunteers run out of money

GAWAD/A18

Gov't, bakers launch Pinoy 'pan de sal' project

By Jerome Aning

PILA, Laguna—Pinoy *pan de sal*: Same price, same weight and same ingredients, available to all, from Aparri to Jolo.

The Department of Trade and Industry hopes to achieve this goal by the end of the year as it launched here last week the Pinoy Pandesal project for Southern Tagalog. The project will standardize the weight and price of the popular bread, using a Vitamin A-fortified, bromate-free flour mix.

President Macapagal-Arroyo and Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II launched Pinoy Pandesal on April 7 in Makati City. This was followed by similar events in the cities of Manila, Cebu, Davao and Tagbilaran.

The "one country, one *pan de sal*" idea arose from dialogues between the DTI and the Philippine Federation of Bakers Association Inc., which is comprised of 10,000 bakers nationwide.

PFBAI president Bartolome Hermosura Sr. said every *pan de sal* produced in all bakeries would be sold for at least P1 and would weigh not less than 25 grams.

This will put to end complaints that the *pan de sal* is becoming more expensive while getting smaller and lighter, he said.

Ferdinand Hernandez, DTI undersecre-

GOV'T, BAKERS/A20

In filing impeach raps, it's go for broke for Erap

By Raul J. Palabrica

COMMENTARY

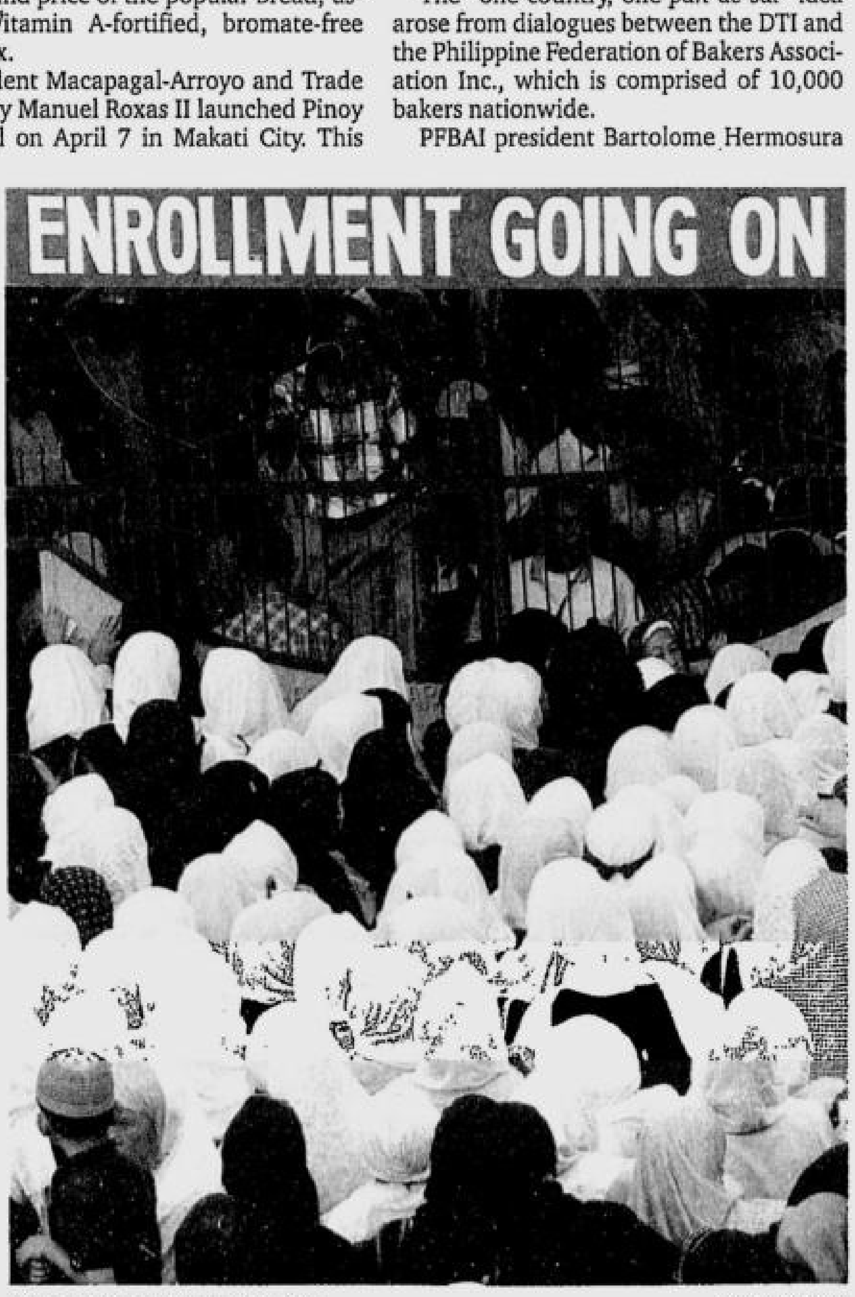
BY SEEKING the impeachment of eight Supreme Court justices whom he thinks were responsible for his removal from office, ousted President Joseph Estrada has confirmed what many have suspected all along. He is not interested in a judicial determination of his innocence or guilt in the charges that led to his downfall.

He wants to give his political enemies a dose of the bitter medicine they gave him when they walked out of his Senate impeachment trial and brought to the streets the resolution of the issues against him. The *quid pro quo* may either be in the form of his followers taking to the streets to return him to power or the President elected in 2004 will be sympathetic to him.

From Day One of the plunder trial, Estrada and his lawyers were determined to stall the hearing of the charges against him. They used every legal maneuver or trick in the book to delay the proceedings. If a course outline in law school were to be written on "how not to conduct a speedy trial," the events in the two-year-old trial can provide appropriate instructional materials.

The freeze started in February 2001 shortly after then Ombudsman Aniano Desierto initiated the filing of plunder charges against Estrada, who then claimed that as President, he was immune from suit. But the Supreme Court, voting 13-0,

IN FILING/A18



WAITING FOR GLORIA
Some of the 5,000 teachers who wanted to see President Macapagal line up at the gate of the Jamiatu Muslim Mindanao school quadrangle in Marawi City.
EDWIN BACASMAS

Gov't distance learning goes the extra mile

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The lack of a classroom need not get in the way of a formal education. To meet the shortage of traditional classrooms, especially in conflict-ridden areas in Mindanao, the government is deploying 15 "techno-vans" loaded with learning materials.

Priority Programs and Overseas-Assisted Projects Secretary Marita Jimenez said the Strong Republic Education program, which would be launched today, means children even in the remotest villages of Mindanao could receive a formal education outside the four walls of a classroom: inside chapels, social halls, barangay reading centers, barangay halls, private homes "and even under the mango tree."

The vans are part of the government's Distance Learning Schools program, which aims to raise the literacy rate in the country's most impoverished areas.

For a start, the government has targeted about 3,000 barangays in rural areas, including those considered to be under the influence of various rebel groups.

"The program aims to provide basic education, the 3Rs learning method, outside the conventional school of learning and

GOV'T/A17

I SMELL HEAVEN!

Durian new flavor in condoms

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—No more beating around the bush. The durian fruit, long intimated to be an aphrodisiac, has landed right on coveted territory—as a scent for condoms.

Make love, not babies.

In Indonesia, where the titillating new product was launched only two weeks ago, eager beavers reportedly emitted a collective "Oh!" and snapped up

DURIAN/A17

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern sections of Central and Southern Luzon will experience stormy weather and the coastal waters of these areas will be rough. The rest of Eastern Luzon will have rains and occasional gusty winds with moderate to rough seas. The rest of the country will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: ARMIN ADINA, PDI RESEARCH/06/16/03

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Metro Manila	Cloudy with rains	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with rains
Baguio	Cloudy with rains	**Roxas**	Cloudy with rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with rains	**Cebu**	Cloudy with rains
Laoag	Cloudy with rains	**Tacloban**	Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with rains	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with rains	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with rains
Legazpi	Stormy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with rains
Calapan	Cloudy with rains	**Davao**	Cloudy with rains

National debt grows by ₱1.1B a day–DOF

By Carlito Pablo

THIS is a fact: the national government debt grew by P1.1 billion a day from March 2002 to the same month this year, or from P2.501 trillion to P2.897 trillion in one year.

The national debt consists of loans made by government agencies, and liabilities resulting from government bond floats and the issuance of treasury bills.

Alarmed by the Macapagal administration's "debt dependency," the chair of the House committee on appropriations is making yet another pitch for the seemingly lost cause of imposing a debt cap or a ceiling on indebtedness.

"At present, the government is a helpless debt addict," said Lakas Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. of Camarines Sur.

Andaya said a debt cap would stop the government "from borrowing in our children's name, from mortgaging their future, and from consigning them to inherit our debts."

He said the P2.897 trillion figure, an increase of 15.8 percent over last year, was released by the Department of Finance itself.

Still, Andaya pointed out, the amount was just a little more than half of the government's obligations.

'Public sector debt'

He noted that the entire "public sector debt" was now estimated at P5.3 trillion.

Aside from the national government debt, this includes the so-called contingent debt which represents sovereign guarantees for loans incurred by the private sector, liabilities of the old Central Bank, and those of government corporations.

To service the public debt, Andaya said, the government is scheduled to cough up P425.7 billion this year, broken down as follows: P230.7 billion for interest payments and P195 billion in principal amortization.

"This means that P1.166 billion leaves the treasury daily, money that could be spent for schools and hospitals, instead of being remitted to creditors," he lamented. "Debt siphons money away from social services. A large part of the nation's misery can be traced to the debt pile-up."

Marcos' time

Since the time of President Ferdinand Marcos, proposals to impose a debt cap have failed to gain ground, apparently because of pressure from international multi-lateral lending agencies.

Debt payments, according to existing laws, are considered automatic appropriations and, as such, cannot be touched by the legislature.

Andaya said a Malacañang-certified bill imposing a debt cap could stop the outflow of precious "and scarce" resources.

The current public sector debt, he stressed, was equivalent to 136 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), which represents the country's internally generated income from goods and services.

According to Andaya's proposal, the debt cap will place the public sector debt at par with the GDP within five years of its passage, and bring it down to 80 percent of the GDP in the sixth year.

"A borrowing ceiling will force the government to rely more on tax collection and less on loans to finance its operations," Andaya said.

GMA & Willie: Sweeter second time around?

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and her estranged former chief of staff, Bulacan Rep. Wilfrido Villarama, have apparently put their differences behind them with the latter now joining the chorus of friends and associates urging the President to seek a full term in 2004.

"I can't accept that other candidates are better than her," Villarama said in an interview.

"Sure, the others are capable as well but with her extensive experience, she has grown in office and there's no more learning curve for her," he said.

Villarama, who only last December delivered a privileged speech that seemed to impugn the integrity of the President, now says that he "can't see myself going against her."

"Given the chance, I would like to convince her," he said.

In that privileged speech, Villarama claimed that as then Vice President Macapagal's chief of staff, he had collected a total of P18 million in checks from controversial businessman Mark Jimenez between December 1998 and early 1999 upon orders of Ms Macapagal's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Malacañang admitted that Jimenez did make a donation to the Lualhati Foundation, a charitable institution identified with Ms Macapagal, but only in the amount of P8 million.

Charges and counter-charges were made about where the unaccounted-for P10 million went but the issue was never resolved.

The rift was apparently repaired last May during the President's state visit to the US.

According to Villarama, he received a call from the First Gentleman asking him to join the presidential party at a dinner in Los Angeles.

Villarama went and, as he put it, "We go back a long time and our friendship can withstand any '*munting tampuhan*' (little spat) that comes along the way."

The association between the Macapagal and Villarama families goes all the way back to the time of President Diosdado Macapagal, the President's father.

Villarama and Ms Macapagal both began their public careers as assistant secretaries in the Department of Trade and Industry.

They worked together for 12 years—from the DTI to Ms Macapagal's stint as a senator to her election as vice president—until he resigned as her chief of staff in March 1999 on account of the "usual office intrigues."

Villarama said he believes the President's announcement of Dec. 30, 2002 that she was not running in 2004 was "perhaps done out of frustration."

"There she was working 24 hours a day and yet the people around her can't seem to follow through on her vision. That decision was reached emotionally and haphazardly," he said.

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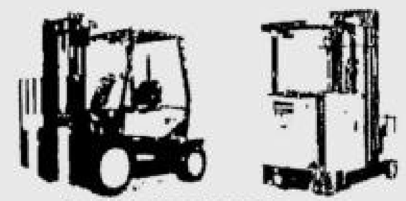

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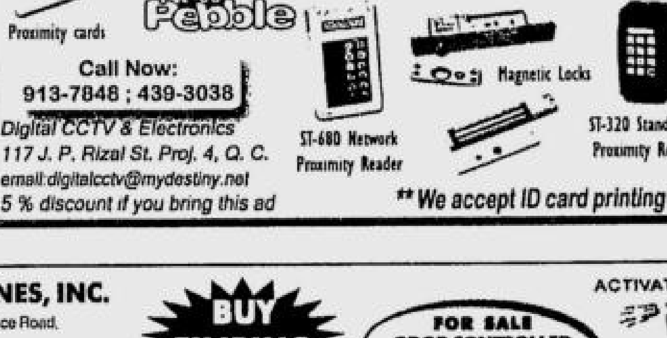

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There's more behind extort try at NBI, doctors claim

By Christian V. Esguerra

A GROUP of medical doctors yesterday asked the National Bureau of Investigation to widen its probe of the agency's medico-legal unit as there may be other members involved in the criminal practice of tampering with medical certificates for a fee.

Dr. Ben Molino, co-chair of the 100-strong Medical Action Group, said it was highly unlikely that only Dr. Maximo Reyes, the dismissed chief of the medico-legal unit, was the only one involved.

"It's been around for more than 10 years. In medical circles, we know that many are involved, from the medico-legal trainees to their bosses. That's why we were not surprised when Reyes was arrested," Molino said in an interview.

Reyes was dismissed after being caught in the act of receiving P200,000 he allegedly extorted from doctors in an entrapment operation in his office at NBI headquarters in Manila.

Molino said his group would assist the NBI in building the case against Reyes and his alleged accomplices by encouraging doctors and even civilians to come forward and file charges against them.

He said the NBI's credibility was virtually shattered when Reyes was caught taking the bribe money from a Pangasinan-based doctor whose patient had died after giving birth.

The complainant, Dr. Lenet Chan, could also be charged with medical malpractice, said Senior Supt. Alan Purisima, chief of the Police Anti-Crime Emergency and Response team.

"She would not have sought NBI help if she had nothing to hide," Purisima said.

Molino said he was not calling for an investigation to further destroy the NBI.

"There has to be a total cleansing of its medical staff for the agency to regain its credibility," he said.

The medico-legal unit is the key to resolving many criminal cases because it is takes charge of conducting autopsies on crime victims. Reyes and his men are often called to the witness stand and their findings are often deemed official.

Citing informal complaints that he had heard from other doctors, Molino said there have been instances when NBI people would approach medical doctors and offer to fix medical certificates and autopsy reports whose results could be detrimental to the doctors' careers.

This malpractice also involved civilians wanting to get favorable results for whatever reason, he said.

"Just imagine if all these things were true," Molino said, "Imagine how many innocent lives are in jail now and how many ruthless criminals are on the prowl."

'90 days enough time for cover-up'

THE MILITANT fisherfolk group Pamalakaya yesterday said the proposed 90-day investigation into where P9.1 billion in government agency collections went would only give the corrupt officials involved time to cover up the money's suspected disappearance.

Pamalakaya national chair Fernando Hicap said Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin's proposal of a 90-day search for the missing funds "appears like a guaranteed period for those government officials involved in the violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act to clear their names or even stop the controversy from involving the Office of the President."

Boncodin, over the weekend, announced that a task force composed of budget, finance and treasury officials had been formed to look into the records of the 12 government agencies with P9.1 billion in unremitted funds.

"An independent probe must be undertaken to uphold the national interest and public trust," Hicap said.

He said Malacañang officials are "expected to water down or shelve this super crime of corruption to save the present ruling clique, since those involved are appointees and close associates of President Macapagal."

The agencies whose fee remittances to the Bureau of the Treasury were far lower than their actual collection figures in 2002 include the Bureau of Food and Drugs, Bureau of Fire Protection, Securities and Exchange Commission, Department of Foreign Affairs, Professional Regulation Commission, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Land Transportation and Franchise Regulatory Board, National Telecommunications Commission, Land Registration Authority, Air Transportation Office and the Land Transportation Office.

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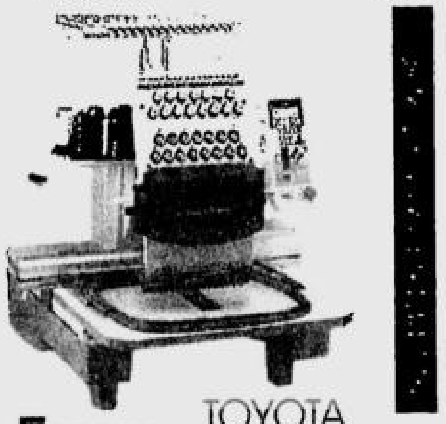
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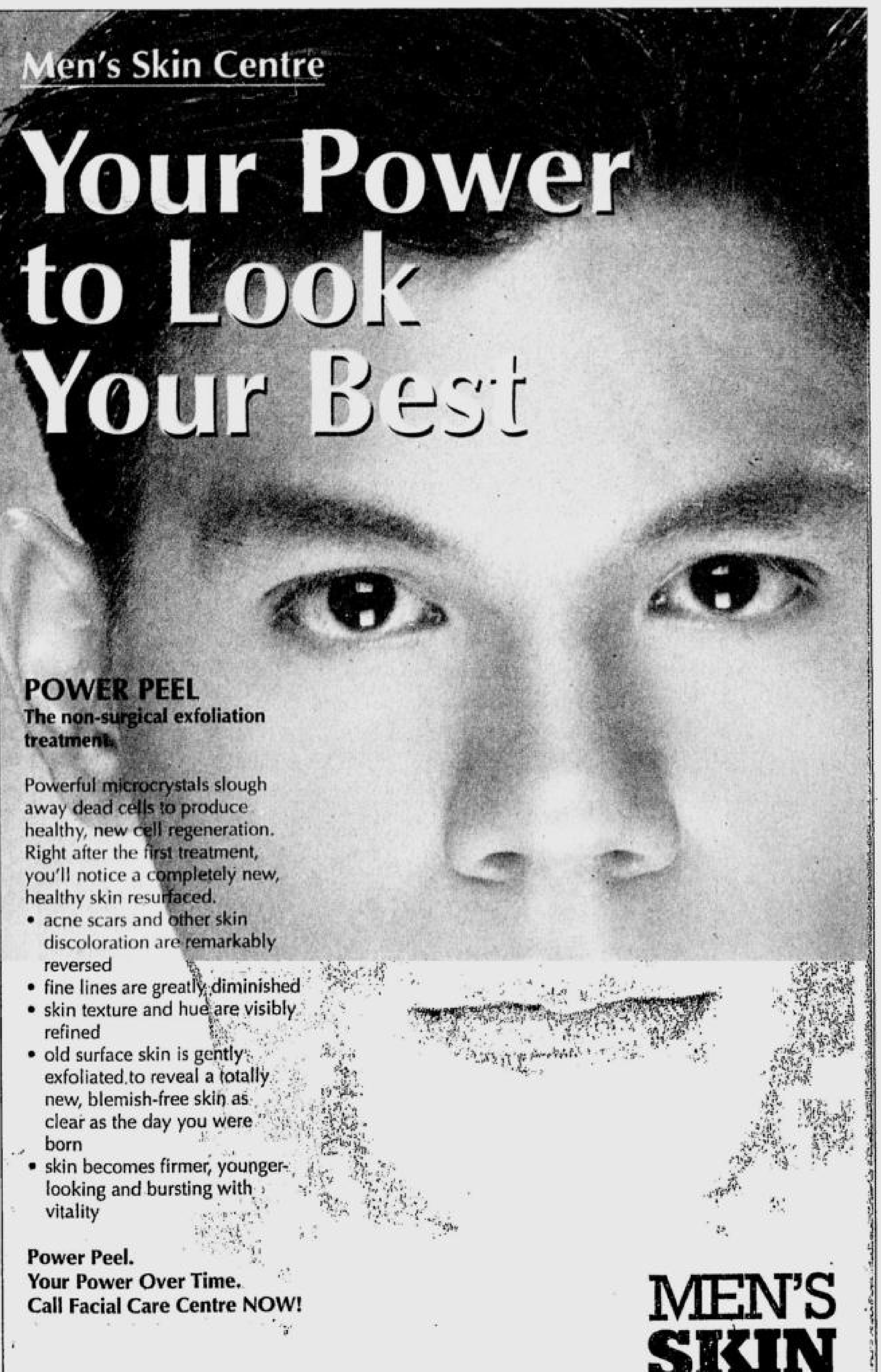
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Diseased hogs worth ₱1.4M burned in Luzon

By Norman Bordadora

SOME P1.4 million worth of livestock from 23 slaughterhouses in Luzon have been burned and buried by the Department of Agriculture and the National Meat Inspection Commission because of infection from foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).

Dr. Efren C. Nuestro, the NMIC executive director, said the condemned hogs came from various farms and stockyards in Luzon and were confiscated from accredited slaughterhouses in Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, the Cordillera Administrative Region and Metro Manila.

Nuestro said FMD remains a problem for the country and the government was doing its best to control and eradicate the disease for which the cooperation of the private sector is needed.

"The FMD cases could have been prevented or minimized, we have to look into the farm and care of our livestock. We need to increase our vigilance and to strictly observe hygienic and sanitary practices in farms and slaughterhouses," Nuestro said.

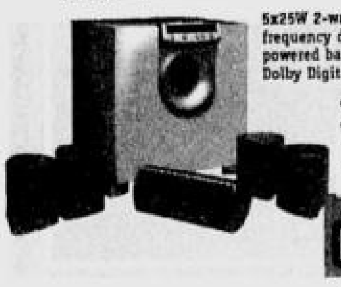
FMD is an acute, highly infectious viral disease affecting cloven-hooved animals such as cattle, pigs, sheep and goats. It is endemic in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and South America, with sporadic outbreaks in disease-free areas.

The condemned hogs had a combined weight of almost 20 tons and were worth P1,366,220. They were confiscated from some 23 accredited slaughterhouses in four Luzon regions by the DA-NMIC compliance monitoring team.

DA Administrative Order No. 32 issued by Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo on Jan. 6 ordered the strict implementation of measures for the control and eradication of FMD.

Nuestro said the cost of disposing of condemned animals and disinfecting contaminated facilities comes to P5,500 per incident, while that of maintaining a six-man team to undertake compliance monitoring averages P75,210 a month.

There have been at least 32 such incidents during the past two-and-a-half months, Nuestro said.



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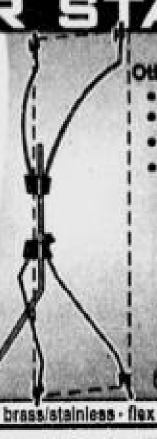

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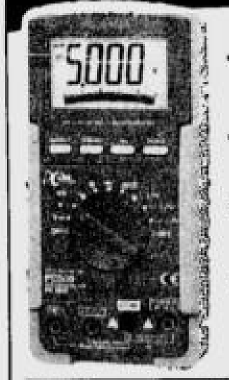

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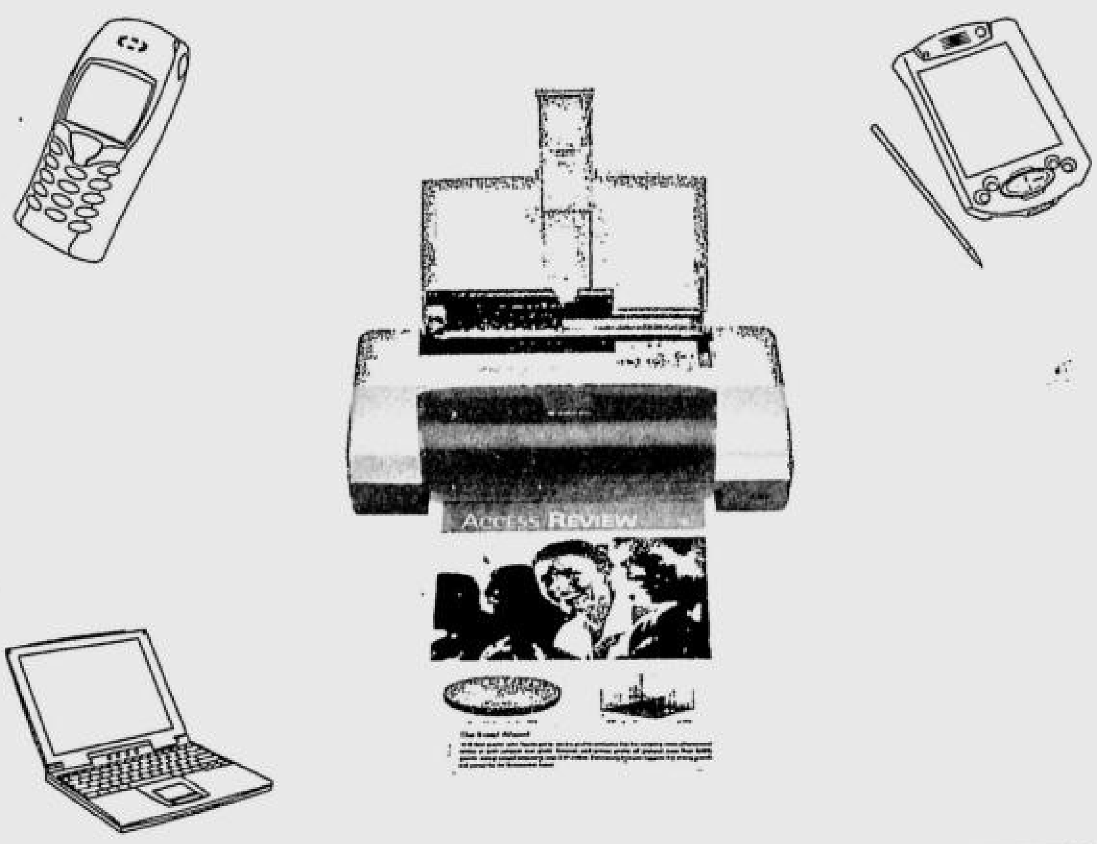

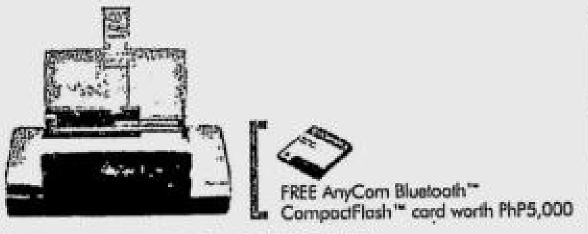

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GMA, Danding not fit to be president, says Church group

A CHURCH-based militant group yesterday said it would be "morally and politically disastrous" for the country if either President Macapagal-Arroyo or businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco wound up as President in 2004.

In a statement, the Promotion for Church People's Response (PCPR) attacked the moral and political fitness of both Ms Macapagal and the San Miguel Corp. chair to run the country.

"They don't deserve the people's votes because they lack the moral and political will to address the fundamental problems of the poor and the landless while they serve personal interests," said Fr. Allan Arcebuche, PCPR spokesperson.

Amid nagging questions about her real intentions in 2004, the President continued to remain silent on the issue as she met reporters in Iligan City late Saturday.

'Trap'

"Don't try to trap me into talking politics," Ms Macapagal snapped at a reporter who dared to ask her about it.

Marita Jimenez, the assistant secretary for overseas development assistance, told reporters the pressure on Ms Macapagal to run was not only coming from within the country but also from international leaders "who (have seen) the results of her performance."

But Jimenez said Ms Macapagal was firm about not running in 2004.

During her trips to other areas covered by her weeklong Mindanao working visit, Ms Macapagal encountered local government officials who invariably tried to persuade her to change her mind by assuring her of their "unified and full support."

"In this critical period of the history of our country, President Macapagal-Arroyo has demonstrated the capabilities, competence and sincerity of a great leader," read a declaration signed by local officials in Mindanao.

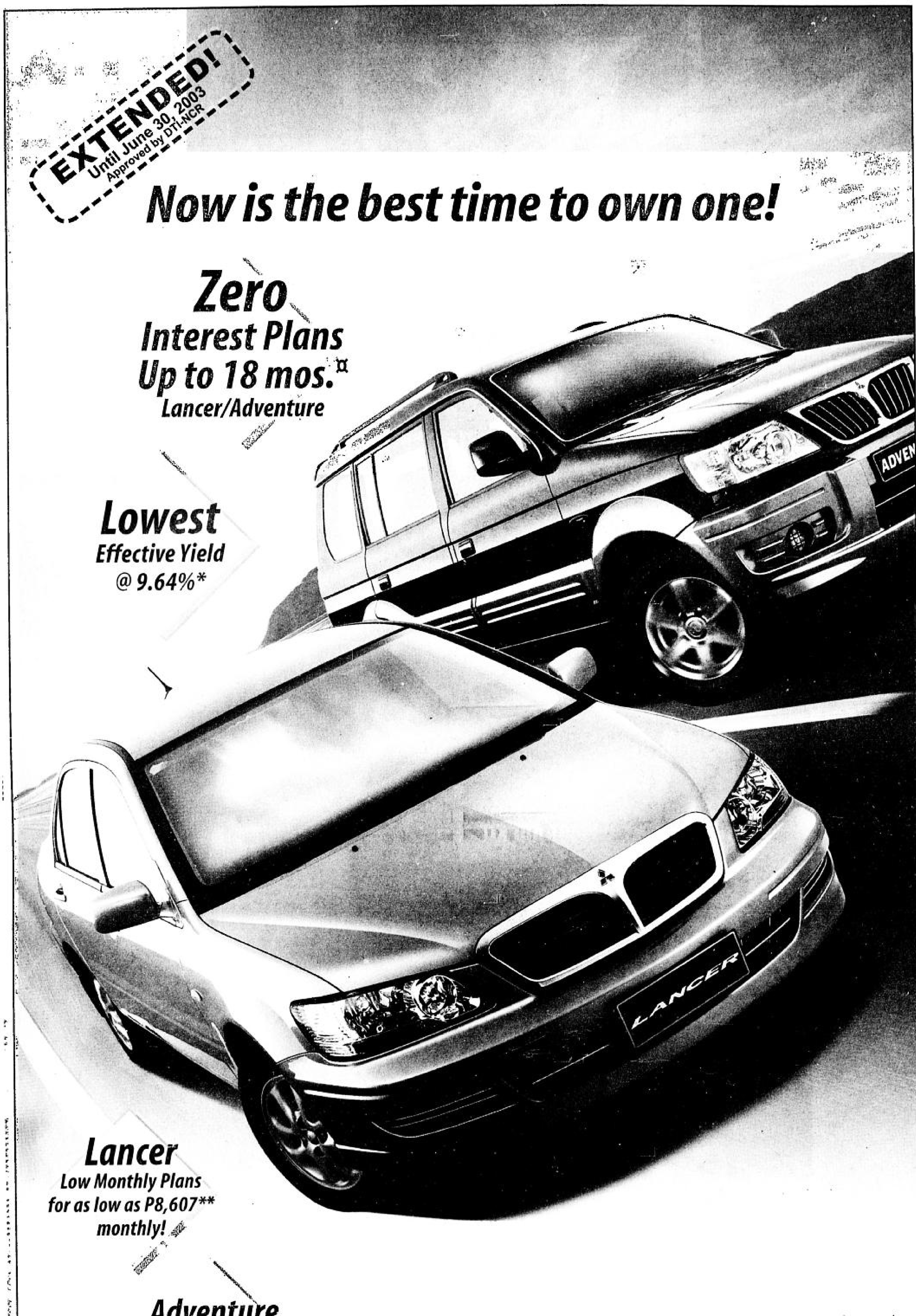
Smile

The President smiled but said nothing as the declaration was read before her at the Alsons Guest House where she spent Saturday night.

The PCPR said that under the Macapagal administration, huge tracts of land remained in the hands of a few families, like the Cojuangcos. It said the landed families managed to exempt themselves from the agrarian reform program.

"In Isabela alone, San Miguel Corp.'s cassava plantation project covers 150,000 hectares, or 15 percent of the province's entire land area. Some 30,000 farmers and cultural minorities have been displaced by the project," Arcebuche said.

"If either Danding or Gloria becomes president, it would be morally and politically disastrous for poor Filipinos who have long been hoping for a real government that would implement true land reform," he added. *Norman Bordadora; Jeffrey P. Maningo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*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Leave Charter provisions alone, tillers warn solons

A MILITANT farmers' group yesterday warned of street riots and agrarian unrest if Congress lifted the protectionist provisions of the Constitution, during the process of amending the Charter.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas was reacting to a statement by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel that Charter change would be the first order of business when Congress reopens next month.

Charter change proponents, led by House Speaker Jose de Venecia, are pushing for constitutional amendments to change the form of government from presidential to parliamentary and to lift the protectionist policies which are seen as obstructing foreign investments.

"Granting foreigners 100 percent ownership of land and the removal of any remaining protectionist economic provisions in the Charter is a big blow to the Filipino peasantry and to our country's national patrimony and sovereignty," said KMP chair Rafael Mariano in a statement.

He said there would be "intense" agrarian unrest in the rural areas and street protests in the cities.

Matiano said the Macapagal-Arroyo administration was making a move to "tailor-fit" the 1987 Constitution to the needs of "free-market" globalization with the United States as the prime beneficiary.

The KMP is one of the groups supporting Vice President Teofisto Guingona's campaign to stop Charter change. The coalition is made up of some civil society and militant leftist groups.

House leaders behind the Charter change campaign said, however, that Charter change would focus solely on the shift to a parliamentary form of government and would not take up the repeal of the protectionist provisions.

Rep. Eduardo Nachura (Lakas, Western Samar), chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, indicated this new approach was being resorted to as time appears to be running out.

In a statement, Nachura said the review of economic provisions in the 1987 Constitution can wait.

"The federal states by their independent nature should be empowered to decide on the protectionist provisions of the Charter subject to policy guidelines of the national parliament," Nachura said.

By limiting the agenda of the proposed constituent assembly, Charter change proponents are apparently anxious that debates on economic provisions would derail the principal agenda, that is, the shift to a parliamentary system.

Speaker Jose de Venecia has said that if the amendments are not made before the 2004 elections, the country will have to wait until 2010 or at the end of the six-year term of a new elected president. *Norman Bordadora and Carlito Pablo*

Diwalwal folk told to leave ahead of 'slides

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources issued an advisory Saturday for residents in the Mt. Diwalwal gold-rush site to leave because of the threat of landslides.

The result of the latest geo-hazard assessment study by the DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau showed there are people residing in unstable areas on Mt. Diwalwal (Diwata) in Compostela Valley.

Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun, in an interview, said local government officials in the Mt. Diwalwal area should immediately implement a relocation program to prevent a major accident.

Aside from the unstable ground, Gozun said this season's rains could trigger landslides.

"We would like to prevent another accident from happening so we strongly appeal to the local officials to put up a systematic relocation of houses and infrastructure to safer areas at the soonest possible time," Gozun said.

The mines bureau geo-hazard team has identified the Mabatas area as a possible relocation site.

The study identified the highly susceptible and critical zones, which are affected by major landslides and the unstable terrain.

The report blamed logging and mining in the area for the present dangerous condition of some portions of the mountain.

At full operation, Mt. Diwalwal could produce no less than P2 billion worth of gold yearly.

The national government recently suspended large and medium-scale mining on the mountain due to unresolved ownership and environmental contamination issues. Only small-scale mining is allowed.

The DENR is reportedly installing a proper mine tailings pond with the assistance of the private sector-led Chamber of Mines, to check pollution and contamination in the area where many miners have gotten sick.

PMA'er goes to West Point

A PHILIPPINE Air Force colonel's son has been admitted to the prestigious US Military Academy (USMA) in West Point, New York.

Philippine Military Academy (PMA) cadet Carl Liwanag, son of Col. Ricardo Liwanag, is the lone Filipino in the 14-member USMA Class of 2007. A total of 147 applicants from all over the world vied for the limited slots.

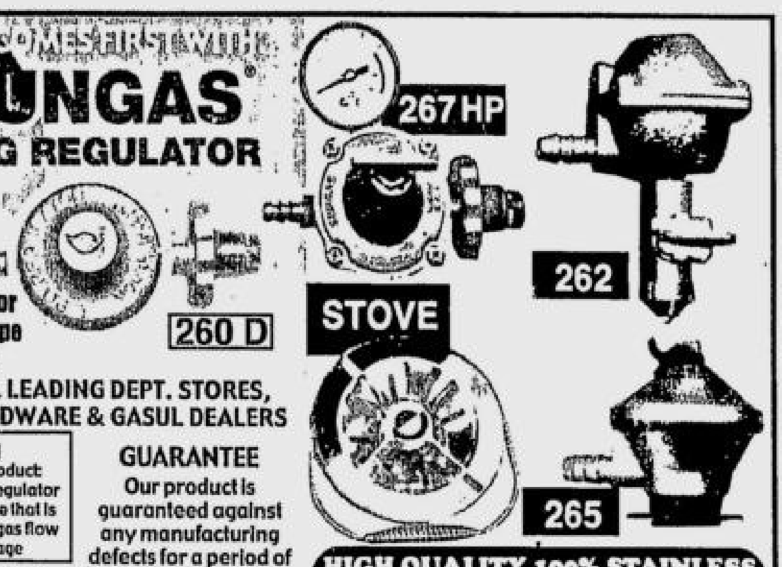
The younger Liwanag is also one of at least three cadets whose tuition have been waived.

He had just completed his "plebehood," or freshman year, at the PMA when he passed the West Point admission test.

Selection was based on academic performance, leadership attributes and physical fitness, on top of a qualifying examination and an interview.

Liwanag will leave for New York on June 23.

Since 1913, 72 Filipinos have graduated from West Point. They include former President Fidel Ramos and incumbent AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya. *Christian V. Esguerra*



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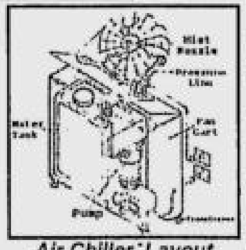

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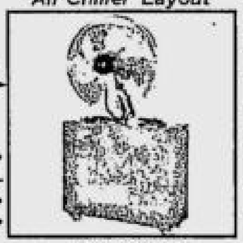

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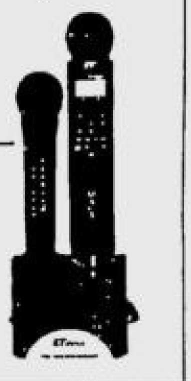

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
MONDAY, JUNE 16, 2003

EUGENIA D. APOSTOL *Founding Chairman*

INQUIRER

Vol. 18 No. 188
ISSN 0116-2642

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

OPINION

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
• Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
• P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
• Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
• Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 • Advertising 897-4807
• Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

Publisher **ISAGANI YAMBOT**
Editor in Chief **LETTY JIMENEZ-MAGSANOC**
Managing Editor **JOSE MA. D. NOLASCO**
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Lessons for life

EDITORIAL

WITH MILLIONS of students trooping to their classrooms today, the academic year has started in earnest. But the traditional summer months have not been lacking in lessons for those willing to learn. In truth, some of the most important values we expect our students to gain from their education—understood in the classic Greek sense, as the formation of character—were taught again and again in the months since the Class of 2003 was graduated last March.

We highlight at least six lessons for life.

The biggest event in the last three months was the successful invasion of Iraq by the US-led coalition of the willing. But victory over the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein has been undermined by fundamental questions about the nature of the attack. One of the main reasons for the forced regime change was the alleged Iraqi stockpile of weapons of mass destruction. To date, however, not a single WMD has been found. A parliamentary inquiry has been started in Britain, and noises about starting one in the United States have been sounded, to find out whether George W. Bush or Tony Blair manipulated the evidence (as some intelligence analysts now say) or lied to the public. The lesson: Might, even of the shock-and-awe kind, does not make right.

The impressive choreography of Bush's aircraft-carrier moment, when he announced the effective end of the war in Iraq before an ecstatic crowd gathered on board the USS Abraham Lincoln, was the same shock-and-awe doctrine applied successfully to public relations. But his declaration did not mean that the hostilities were in fact at an end. About a third of all American casualties in Iraq have died *after* Bush tried to do a Top Gun. The lesson: Image is not necessarily reality.

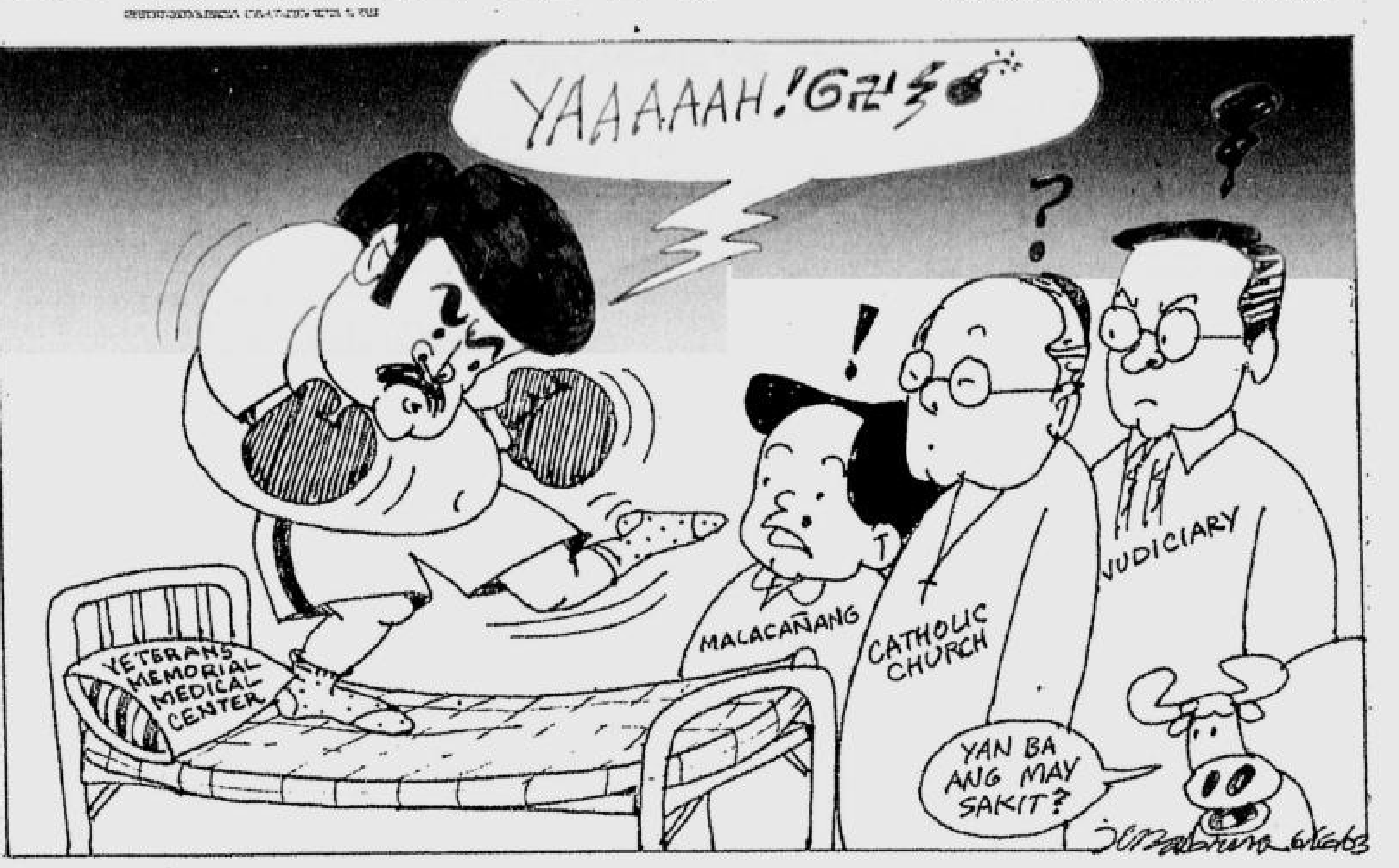
The question of whether a leader's word can be trusted has also animated the endless discussion over President Macapagal-Arroyo's promise not to contest the May 2004 elections. Many of her supporters have pointed to her successful state visits to the United States, South Korea and Japan as evidence that the country needs her brand of leadership for another six years. These supporters in the Palace, in Congress and in the business community have blithely forgotten one of the major assumptions behind the President's historic Rizal Day speech: She will always be considered a divisive figure in politics, because of the way she came to power. We did not say that; she did. The lesson: Power breeds selective amnesia.

Doctors Maximo Reyes, chief of the medico-legal division of the National Bureau of Investigation, and Jet Castro of the NBI office in Dagupan must have forgotten their Hippocratic oaths, as well as their public service duties. Caught in the act of extorting P200,000 from a fellow physician last week, they have in one blow made all NBI forensic findings suspect. And to think that Castro joined the agency only last August. The lesson: Corruption is a culture that corrodes even science.

But the recent rash of stories about yet more corruption in the education sector proves that this corrosive culture is not the preserve of politicians or public officials alone. Businessmen and professionals also roam inside the precincts. For every public servant who takes, there is a private-sector counterpart who gives. The lesson: Corruption is not limited to the government alone.

By now, information about the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome is coming out of our students' ears. But one of the most effective anti-SARS measures is also the simplest: Wash our hands. While the institutions of public life have a role to play, the main responsibility for public health lies with each individual member of the public. This is as it should be. The lesson: Our health, like the future itself, lies quite literally in our hands.

Much of the news last week was dominated by the sensational sexual-harassment charges—first aired through Newsbreak magazine—allegedly committed by Bishop Teodoro Bacani against his secretary of five years. But the most important piece of news was literally a thousand miles away—in Barangay Inug-ug, Pagalungan, Maguindanao. The residents of the community, with the help of civil-society groups, moved might and main to successfully turn their area into a sanctuary of peace. The lesson: Hope is not imposed from the outside; it is something we build, by ourselves or as a whole.



P632,000 burned/stolen inside GSIS bank vault

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

A TOP official of the Government Service Insurance System once boasted to me that the GSIS had more money than it knew what to do with. That is why it is forced to invest in unsafe ventures. "We have money to burn," he said.

And that's what some officials of the GSIS-owned bank seems to have done—burn some of the money kept in the bank, P632,000 to be exact. You have not read or heard this incident because the GSIS, the bank and the police have kept it away from the media, but documents I got hold of tell what happened.

On the morning of Jan. 9, 2003, officials of the GSIS-Family Bank (GFB), Imus (Cavite) branch, noticed the strong odor of kerosene, or some other flammable material, when they arrived to open the bank.

Accounting assistant Kathleen Vargas went straight to the main vault door to open it, "but was met by unbearable gas fumes that hovered all over the main vault," according to the investigation report of Eduardo Evangelista Untalan, chief of police of Imus.

She called cash custodian Rosemarie Jamir who in turn found scattered burned pieces of paper on the floor of the vault. She also found burned pieces of paper at the cash safe vault. She discovered later, that money "amounting to more or less P700,000 was already missing in the cash safe vault." Whoever was behind the incident wanted to make it appear that the cash was burned in an accidental fire inside the vault.

But here is the mysterious part: Beside the ashes and burned bits of paper was a bundle of P10,000 in 10-peso bills wrapped in plastic, and untouched by fire.

What happened? Was the plastic wrapping fire proof? It wasn't. Moreover, analysis of the ashes inside the vault indicated that none of it came from burned peso bills. The police concluded that the money was stolen and made to appear as though it was burned.

But what about the unburned P10,000? Did the thieves purposely leave it, just forgot to take it, or didn't think it was money because it was wrapped in plastic?

Another mystery: Although the theft, or fire, was discovered at 8 a.m. of Jan. 9, the Imus police was not informed about it until 5:20 p.m.

There was no sign of forcible entry so the police concluded it was an "inside job." The fire was only inside the vault. Nothing was burned outside it. The fire could not have been caused by faulty electric wiring as the vault was wrapped in steel and concrete. Inside the vault, they found a container containing a liquid that smelled like kerosene or some other flammable material.

How did the thieves open the vault? Here, the internal audit team that investigated the incident found violations of standard bank security procedures.

Different officials kept different keys, one set for the roll-up doors, another set for the padlocks, and another for the main glass door. Another key for the inner grill door to the cash safe area was held by cashier Rosemarie Jamir. The cash safe has a combination lock known only to Jamir. The main vault door has two combinations, the upper combination known by Vargas and the lower combination by teller Janis Reyes.

A secure and safe system, *'di ba*? Yes, when it is followed to the letter. But on the afternoon of Jan. 8, 2002, when the cash safe, grill door, and main vault were closed at the end of business hours, the rules were not followed.

Here is the police report:

"In her sworn statement, Mrs. Vargas revealed that after the cash accounting, she left Mrs. Jamir inside the cash safe vault and set the time delay clock for 14 hours. The door of the main vault would automatically open at 7 o'clock in the morning. After ensuring that she had properly set the time delay lock, Mrs. Vargas went upstairs to answer a call of nature. (She said) she was already at the stairs when she saw Mrs. Jamir closing the door of the main vault. She did not bother the same *(sic)* because they were about to leave the bank."

Branch manager Lolita Alinsod said that the day before, at about 4:45 p.m., when they were about to close the bank, she and her staff already noticed the smell of kerosene and that she ordered a security guard and the janitor to look for its origin. They found nothing, because it was coming from inside the vault.

According to the police report, "Mrs. Jamir admitted in her sworn statement that she did not properly close the cash safe vault before she and other employees left the bank on Jan. 8 since, according to her, the cash safe combination was not working properly." She also admitted that she had closed the main vault in spite of the fact that it was not her duty to do the same but that of Vargas. She however, closed the grill door properly with the key in her custody.

The next morning, after they opened the roll-up door of the bank branch, they smelled again the odor of kerosene and burned paper. After the main vault door was opened, Vargas stepped inside the vault, saw the cash safe door slightly open, and saw the burned paper inside. She called Jamir who entered the vault then got out immediately because of the fumes and reported the missing money."

What has the GSIS and bank done since then?

Voices

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I DON'T know where Fitch Ratings got its impression the current administration has made vast strides, enough for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to run again. It should listen more to comments by thoughtful Filipinos—and foreigners—here and abroad to gauge the national condition. I've gotten several letters from them these past couple of weeks. I'm sharing three very good ones with readers.

I'm just using the writers' first names lest they experience sudden problems with their passports and/or visas:

From Felipe

"Recently your paper bannered GMA's breakdown of the service fees she got from George W. Bush. I worked in Washington for a number of years and I have a pretty good idea of how things work there.

"My questions about that package are:

"1. I noted references to foreign military assistance and the US supplemental budget for foreign military assistance. Are they referring to 2003 or 2004? What part of that money is at the disposal of Bush this year and what part will need to be appropriated by Congress?

"2. Did Bush promise to get appropriations or authorization? There is a world of difference. Congress can authorize any amount but the only thing that matters is what Congress appropriates. The latter can be, and is, done without the former.

"3. Is Bush asking Congress to earmark these funds for the Philippines? Or will it come from what's left after the earmarks for Israel, Egypt, etc.? The rest of the world competes for the leftovers—which is about half or less of the total Foreign Ops Appropriations.

"4. What are the outlay rates for these funds? To keep within limits set by various balanced budget agreements, outlay rates for appropriations are computed by Congress beforehand. When outlay rates go beyond certain parameters, these funds are subject to sequestration.

"5. Are the Balikatan funds meant for exclusive Philippine use or do they include the costs for the American side?

"6. Military engineering brigade and others: Is this money coming from the Defense Budget or from Foreign Ops?

"The question to ask is: Where exactly are the monies coming from? Their answer will tell us whether the checks are ready or whether it falls in the category of 'don't call us, we'll call you.'

"Are the helicopters coming from EDF? Is the $10M in spare parts just to make them fly or is this supposed to include keeping them in the air? Egypt once got tanks from the US, with some spare parts money. They found out that they had to spend their own money to operationalize the tanks. The Egyptians said, 'They gave us a necktie, now we have to buy the suit.'

"Finally, the $76M for Veterans might be passed, but check out what the US really owes those veterans. At one time, all we wanted for our veterans was to be given the same classification as those vets from other countries who were not even US citizens during the war. Those other vets' benefits are computed differently. The $76M for Filipino vets is not even throwing a bone to a dog."

The next paragraph comes from Graham, an American pilot, who offers another perspective, one I've also harped on in a previous column. Which is that even if we grant that all the advertised military hardware is forthcoming, why in hell should we be elated? We need it like a hole in the head.

Graham: "Unfortunately for the AFP, we have a hundred years of bad experience putting high-tech weapons in the hands of Aboriginal Cultures (I take responsibility for saying that the Philippines is an Aboriginal Culture). The outcome is always a disaster. Those who design and make the technology for their own specific needs understand it at the profoundest level and know how to use it. Those who are unlucky enough to be given it free do not even know how to keep it working. Saddam was the latest to fall into the trap, whereas the US is terrified of North Korea because North Korea knows what it has."

And finally, from Maria, a student:

"I find it uncanny that in your column, you talked about President Arroyo's 'war on terrorism' in Mindanao as 'state-sponsored terrorism' when yesterday I spoke up in my Political Science 100 class about how the state is, in a way, terrorizing Mindanao with its declaration of an all-out war against the MILF.

"I am a 21-year-old senior college student at Ateneo. I am a proud Mindanaoan from Davao City. Though I have spent most of the last four years of my life in Quezon City, far from the bombings and war, I still know and feel the repercussions of the government's myopic view on the problem regarding Muslims in Mindanao.

"When I was in Davao several months ago, the Davao International Airport was bombed. I believe that bombing, as well as the Sasa Wharf bombing, was an isolated case triggered by no less than the government's insistence that Mindanao be rid of so-called 'terrorists.' The consequence of those two bombings was a declaration of 'state of lawlessness' which triggered a greater fear in me. Particularly disturbing was the sudden discrimination against Muslims and how many Muslims, some grieving their own losses, were arrested and accused of a crime they might have not committed.

"Sen. Aquilino Pimentel is not alone in thinking the government, specifically President Arroyo, is doing a great injustice to the already impoverished citizens of the Muslim Mindanao area. This war is not the solution to the problems of the Muslims in Mindanao. Instead of waging a war, why doesn't President Arroyo look at the root of the problem? Is listening and looking for a solution to the real problems in Mindanao really that hard? Or are peace talks and diplomacy just not good enough for President Arroyo?"

Some voices are loud enough to wake up the dead. Except that some dead are too dead to be awakened by anything.

Another 'comelec' in trouble

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST Saturday I wrote about the complaint of two-term Mayor Sonia Lorenzo of San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, that Comelec Chair Ben Abalos has thwarted established rules and procedures in order to ram through the proclamation of her rival. Lorenzo has urgently asked the Supreme Court, which had earlier upheld her proclamation, to stop Abalos' unilateral order for the canvassing of votes, scheduled to begin today. But now another "comelec" committee is also under fire. This is the three-member body chaired by Napoleon Vergara, that will canvass also starting today the votes in the recent hotly contested election in the UP Alumni Association (UPAA).

* * *

For years the UPAA has been dominated by the Upsilon Sigma Phi fraternity, but this year a group led by Nelia Gonzalez, former UP Regent and assistant minister of agriculture, decided to challenge that dominance, in the belief that the UPAA board members should be drawn from sectors and professional groups, not just from one fraternity. However, Gonzalez's group, known as the "Group of 21" (GP 21), has accused Upsilon of "brazenly making a mockery. of the elections" by allegedly trying to rig the results at all cost and delaying their disclosure. GP 21 also charged the Upsilonians with attempting to pad the voters' list with unqualified voters, including names of alumni long deceased! It has also accused the UPAA comelec, whose chair and another member are both Upsilonians, of denying GP 21's petition to nullify the frat's list of voters, changing rules in midstream and engaging in very partisan actions.

In the world of politics, tensions over elections are deemed normal, but to carry out scandalous attempts to subvert the elections in the UPAA is *nakakahiya*. Some UP alumni seem no better than the politicians they love to criticize. I would also think that the Upsilon fraternity, which nurtured many outstanding leaders of this country through the generations, would want to redeem its name by desisting from clinging to power through means foul or fair.

* * *

Former Senate President Jovito Salonga cannot be construed as an apologist for President Macapagal-Arroyo—he has been quite critical of, among others, her policy of close alliance with the United States. But in recent weeks he has come out in various media forums vigorously defending the legitimacy of her presidency and assailing the "dilatory tactics" of ex-President Estrada's lawyers (Rene Saguisag has filed an impeachment charge against the Supreme Court justices, while new Erap lawyer Alan Paguia has questioned the jurisdiction of the Sandiganbayan to try Estrada as a "sitting president)." Salonga's main forum is his "President's Page" in Kilosbayan magazine where he wrote a lengthy article titled "How to Delay the Plunder Trial and Incite Chaos, Erap Style." There he rebuts Erap's lawyers point by point, in a lucid, understandable style but elegantly laced with quotes from legal luminaries.

His paper, by the way, is being reprinted separately by Kilosbayan, to be made available cheaply to law and political science students and the public. Call Kilosbayan at 534-5873 and 534-5868.

* * *

This column earlier featured the same points argued by Salonga on the GMA legitimacy issue on the dzRH program Cecile Alvarez and I recently co-hosted. But there's a portion of his Kilosbayan article that's most interesting, where he speculates on several possible worrisome "scenarios." Suppose, he says, that a few major House leaders with "deep-seated resentments" against the Supreme Court justices agree to pool their votes to sustain a finding of probable cause issued by the House committee on justice. These "resentment" triggers could include the coco-levy decision penned by Justice Artemio Panganiban, the Piatco decision by Justice Reynato Puno and the Amari decision by Justice Antonio Carpio.

* * *

Salonga pointed out that 73 votes are needed to send the justices' impeachment to the Senate where the presiding officer would be the Senate president. But because Senate Chief Franklin Drilon has already declared the impeachment case part of a "destabilization plot," Salonga speculates whether there could be a move of the opposition to disqualify Drilon or unseat him. Salonga also speculates that since the case could undermine the finality of the Supreme Court's previous decisions in the Estrada vs Arroyo and Estrada vs Desierto cases, "may not the justices justifiably decide, with the encouragement of the Chief Executive, to boycott the proceedings of the House and the Senate," on the ground that these directly violate the separation of powers, undermines the independence and integrity of the high court, and undercuts the doctrine of *res judicata?* This latter doctrine bars the revival before a court of a case involving the same parties and subject matter that has already been decided with finality in another court of competent jurisdiction.

* * *

Salonga further speculates that if GMA decides to run, and given all the advantages of an incumbent, she would likely win, "how then can the impeachment case prosper in the House or in the Senate?" On the other hand, if the commentaries are correct in predicting the Comelec's foul up of the May 2004 elections due to its failure to modernize them and the difficulties over the Absentee Voting Law, Salonga opines that Estrada's impeachment move could "backfire" as the resulting chaos could eventually lead to a military takeover.

Given all these, says Salonga, the best thing for the country is for Estrada "to face the music in the plunder trial." If he is innocent, as he alleges, he should be absolved. Then too, he stressed, the Special Division of the Sandiganbayan should, in the national interest, finish the plunder trial as soon as possible. Let's all appeal to the patriotism of the Sandiganbayan justices that they see it in this light.

Idiot's guide to Philippine cartography

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

WHILE watching a news program during the height of the SARS scare, I saw this video clip of Zamboanga City medical personnel discussing the possibility of the virus spreading to their city when I heard that term again.

A doctor, apparently worried sick, expressed his fears about the SARS virus coming in, like a thief in the night, disembarking from a boat from the "back door." Meaning, Sulu and possibly Tawi-Tawi.

It did not occur to the good doctor that the virus could fly in on one of the airlines that daily land in the city bringing in homecoming OFWs. Bad things don't come through the front door.

The back door is where SARS, fugitives, smugglers, kidnappers, gunrunners, the Jemaah Islamiah, scums and assorted lowlife gain entry into or exit from the country.

With this term we have effectively dichotomized this country into the "front door" and the "back door," north and south, the metropolis and the boondocks, progress and backwardness, Christian and Muslim, and all the while decrying our disunity.

And I blame this front door-back door mindset for many things happening to us as a nation.

It is because of this that we deserve only the afterthought, the surplus, the rejects.

They even took Palawan away from Mindanao, and so Malampaya, which could spur the development of provinces that cannot be reached by the Mindanao grid, flows into Metro Manila to sustain the fuel-guzzling lifestyle of the nation's movers, shakers and entertainers.

Although in fairness to the movers and shakers, they do think of Mindanao whenever the guns roar and the blood flows.

And when they do think of Mindanao, it is usually in connection with what might have been and what could be, meaning, Mindanao could have been, or could be, the country's "food basket." Another term that grates on the mind. As in, how utterly gross. Guess who will burn in the sun, whose backs will break to produce those comestibles?

Cavite hosts the naval headquarters because it is part of the front door; all we have are two very leaky patrol boats. And when the Abu Sayyaf sail in broad daylight to Malaysian beach resorts to kidnap tourists, Misuari escapes to Malaysia, human smuggling results in such tragedies as the overloaded MV Annahada that claimed the lives of close to 200 people, we wonder how that could have happened, with the cluelessness of a half-wit.

We lay claim to the palm-size sand dunes we call the Spratlys because it is within the territory of the front door and we are even willing to fight several countries to assert our rights, but we always place our legitimate claim to resource-rich Sabah in the "back burner" because it is part of the back door.

I have always wondered too, what it is we have done that have made us deserve this humiliating relegation, and no matter how I try, the answer is always the same—because we resisted the invaders and Christianity; because we are Muslim, we are lumad, and therefore children of a lesser God.

And through time, we had to learn this queer cartography.

Where our racial brothers came through is the back door. Where the white man pounced upon us is the front door.

Where Islam came with the message of peace and the oneness of God is the back door.

Where Christianity came brandishing a sword and preaching the infallibility of the Pope is the front door.

Where the Makhdumin landed, preaching Islam in mosques that local people willingly constructed with wood, bamboo and nipa is the back door.

Where Christian priests and their architects came with elaborate church plans of properly gothic and rococo designs came is the front door. (Guess whose forced labor translated those plans into stone and mortar?)

Where Arabic culture with its rich heritage of mathematics, the arts and medical science came through is the back door.

Where Western culture with its insistence on progress and development through industrialization and production passed through is the front door. (Guess whose cheap labor is producing for those multinationals?)

And so because we are the back door, we get the trickles. The most scant office supplies, the fewest schools, the most ill-equipped hospitals, the poorest public services, the worst roads, the smallest amount of relief goods.

Along with this is the conviction that we in Mindanao and Sulu are really nothing more than drawers of water and hewers of wood, so that when some activity arises that requires of its participants some measure of mental effort and some of us somehow measure up, we are acknowledged with the inclusive "also."

I recall attending a consultation meeting intended to acquire "inputs" from the locals on the concept of the Borneo-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-Eaga) when this lady lawyer, as if she suddenly discovered a cosmic truth, and with the tone of magnanimity befitting Mother Teresa, stood up and suggested: "Why don't we invite our Muslim brothers? They can also contribute some ideas."

And I realized to my horror that I was the only Muslim present, and truth to tell, I was invited not for my brilliant inputs, but to observe and take notes on the proceedings, and I wondered how these people could be talking about trade and cultural relations with southeast countries with which we Muslims share not only a history and a culture, but also bloodlines, and not a single one was invited to take part in the discussion.

It was at that point that I walked out.

* * *

Comments to nm19@my.smart.com.ph

Zugzwang—child of Sin and Davide's union

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

TERM limits was a philosophical obsession of the framers of the 1987 Freedom Constitution—the rock of President Cory Aquino's legitimacy—aversion to dictatorship and dynasty. The concept is simple. Congressmen are limited to three consecutive terms; senators and vice presidents to two terms; and presidents to one term. Article VII Sec. 4 says:

"The President and Vice President shall be elected by direct vote of the people for a term of six years which shall begin at noon on the 30th day of June next following the day of the election and shall end at noon of the same date, six years thereafter. The President shall not be eligible for any re-election. No person who has succeeded as President and has served as such for more than four years shall be qualified for election to the same office at any time. No Vice President shall serve for more than two successive terms. Voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time shall not be considered as an interruption in the continuity of the service for the full term for which he was elected."

Eligibility is a simple matter of arithmetic (counting with toes or fingers). Suppose Fidel Ramos files to run for President in 2004. The Comelec says: "Sir, you were elected in May 1992 and took your oath June 30—that is 'Zero' in our count. After six years passed, your term 'expired' per the Constitution—that is "One" in our count. Under Article VII you are ineligible for re-election to a second term."

The framers surely intended a mathematically rigorous count of all terms in office—the totality of a citizen's service—from inauguration ("zero") to its end ("one"). The end of a first term and the start of ineligibility for a second term, are legally, logically and synchronously inseparable. A first term must begin with election by direct vote of the people and end by one of five ways: (1) expiration of the six-year term; (2) death; (3) permanent disability; (4) conviction upon impeachment and (5) voluntary resignation.

Any other means by which a President "completes" his one and only allowed term and becomes ineligible for a second term—represents a hiatus, a black hole in the Constitution. It can and should be tested by the instant plebiscite of a political election won or lost by someone claiming the existence of the hiatus—and is the principal victim of it, Joseph Estrada.

For surely, the framers did not intend that a President be "ineligible for any re-election" right there at inauguration. The mere fact of election to the presidency is not what makes one ineligible for a "second term"—it is the existence in fact and in law of a "first term." A second term is what the framers clearly intended to forbid. The framers only thought they had provided for all eventualities that could end a first term. They did not.

Estrada loudly denies he voluntarily resigned and that the Supreme Court is only putting words in his mouth by ruling in Estrada v. Arroyo (2001) that he "effectively resigned." He claims he was ousted in a coup d'etat. Alan Paguia's memorable understatement is "Resignation is not a high-level legal abstraction." I agree—it should be self-evident and unequivocal, as in a written resignation, with his signature to seal it in fact and in law. I think Estrada v. Arroyo ended Estrada's presidency, but did not establish his ineligibility, a future justiciable matter. He is certainly eligible for the vice presidency unless convicted before the elections.

Now what of Justice Artemio Panganiban's book, "Reforming the Judiciary"? Between the lines are limned a constitutionally forbidden incest, maybe on the evening of Jan. 19, 2001, between Jaime Cardinal Sin and Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide. Did they have an apocryphal conversation in which they sired the present crisis? Rizal's fiction and Panganiban's prose make me think so. Rizal's as good as Isaiah. They even fooled Panganiban into thinking it was his idea.

In my opinion, Davide and Sin conspired to administer the oath to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. (She wasn't happy about it—not in that hideous gray dress.) In the tumult and turbulence of Edsa II after the eleven-stroke thrombosis of the impeachment trial, together they overthrew Estrada, "for the good of the nation." It is a classic case of three wrongs don't make a right. First Erap and Jose Velarde, then Narvasa and Tatad, then Sin and Davide. Now what?

I believe and trust that every member of the Supreme Court is honorable and just, with a conscience inspired by the holiest spirits of democracy. But in deep discernment of individual roles, now that eight of them are accused of high crimes—let each justice know, it is the vast audience of history that awaits their speech. Eagerly watching are all the sharp minds and curious intellects, all the info-capable e-citizens of the future, all the legal scholars yet unborn, who will microscopically examine the text on their tombstones. Who among them will break *omerta*, admit that Paguia is right and that we have a big problem? Chess aficionados would say the Constitution is in *zugzwang*, the child of Sin and Davide's unholy union. Only courage can break it. Cowardice will reap revulsion forever.

* * *

Join a Happy Birthday at http://joserizal.blogspot.com where the excommunicated Mason is receiving poetry from the diaspora of the Filipinos and Pilosopong Tacio is bashing the hunger strikers at http://pilosopongtacio.blogspot.com

Burma or Myanmar?

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

WHAT'S in a name? So goes a famous line in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet."

Plenty, for people who consider their name as the product of their heritage and culture. Not much, for those who think it's just words that differentiate one person from another.

The way a country's name is reported by the media is a big deal for Antonio Hizon, a second year student at the University of the East, who questioned the INQUIRER's reference to Myanmar as Burma in its reports on the latest political turmoil that has hit the newest member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

His query stemmed from the newspaper's coverage of the events that led to the wounding of opposition leader and Nobel Peace awardee Aung San Suu Kyi in a bloody riot several weeks ago.

Last June 5, the INQUIRER carried the news about that riot with the following head: "Burmese democracy leader hurt by mob." The caption of the accompanying photo of Suu Kyi stated that Rangoon is Burma's capital. The follow-up stories on the efforts of some countries to help resolve the crisis continued to refer to the embattled country as Burma.

The reader wants to know why the newspaper kept on calling that country by its old name when our own Department of Foreign Affairs, Asean and the United Nations recognize it as Myanmar. He said this confuses the readers, especially the students who look up to the INQUIRER as resource material on important events happening around the country and elsewhere in the world. "How would you feel," he asked, "if other people call you by a name other than what appears on top of your front page or what you want to be called? Will you not feel hurt and insulted?"

Name change

Curious about how the change of name came about, I decided to do a little research on this country that has Thailand, Laos and China as its closest neighbors. Until it changed its name to Myanmar (officially, the Union of Myanmar) and that of its capital from Rangoon to Yangon in 1989, the world knew it as Burma. The name change was made at the instance of General Ne Win who seized power from the duly elected prime minister in 1958.

He felt the name Burma had a colonial ring in it. It was associated with the former British colonial masters whom he and other Burmese leaders fought bitterly in their struggle for independence. For the same reason, the leaders of the then Ceylon, and once a part of the British Empire like Burma, changed their country's name to Sri Lanka.

The name Myanmar is in honor of the indigenous Mramma people who, in the 9th century, transformed the country into a major power in the region. Although Myanmar has been recognized as the country's official name in international organizations and forums since 1989, some Western countries continue to refer to it by its old name to show their disapproval of the ruling military junta.

Incidentally, Suu Kyi is the daughter of U Aung San, the Burmese leader who led the nationalist movement that fought for the independence of the country from Great Britain. Three months after he was elected prime minister, he was assassinated together with six of his cabinet ministers.

Protest

The editor in chief knows that Myanmar, not Burma, is the correct name of Suu Kyi's country. The newspaper has kept tabs on her efforts to get rid of the military junta since the 1980s. Before the recent riot hit the headlines, Myanmar was in the news in the recent past because of its application to gain membership in Asean.

So why does the editor in chief continue to use Burma instead of Myanmar in reporting on the latest political problems of that country? To show solidarity or support for Suu Kyi's fight for democracy, that is. The editor in chief said that by refusing to refer to it by the name that the junta wants it called, she is adding the newspaper's voice to the international protest over the continued detention of Suu Kyi and the suppression of the rights of the members of her party.

Her thoughts appear to jibe with those of the international wire agencies that are covering the events in that country. They continue to refer to it as Burma although sometimes the name Myanmar is cited in passing to state that it is also called by that name. I have noticed though that some cable news companies based in Europe use Myanmar in their reports.

I do not want to begrudge the editor in chief her right to support Suu Kyi's cause. Like all other victims of martial rule during the Marcos years, she cannot be faulted for her empathy for the sufferings that the opposition leader is going through at present. Indeed, Suu Kyi deserves all the support she can get from those who believe that freedom is a basic human right that should be enjoyed by everybody regardless of their station in life.

But I doubt if it is proper to use the news pages for the expression of a reporter's or editor's sentiments on an issue. The venue for personal opinions and beliefs is the Opinion section. The readers of this section know that its contents reflect the biases or ideologies of their writers. In other words, they are not news and therefore should not be treated as such.

Objectivity

Myanmar, not Burma, is the internationally accepted name of Suu Kyi's country. It is the name the government of that country wants to call itself. The military junta may not be representative of the Myanmar people, but since it controls the affairs of that country, the international community has no choice but to recognize it as its rightful government.

Under the same principle, I think the media should respect a country's decision on how it wants to be identified or referred to in news reports. If the reporters are allowed to choose the name they want to give a country, the result will be confusion. The readers will not know which is correct and which is a product of the reporter's imagination.

Stretching the comparison a little more, I wonder how we will feel if newspapers abroad refer to our country as Philippine Islands, or P.I., as some American oldtimers do in apparent nostalgic remembrance of their colonial experience, and not the internationally accepted name "the Philippines"?

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocdte@inquirer.com.ph.

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Did the high court set aside time-honored judicial doctrine?

RECENT decisions of the Supreme Court have deviated so grossly from internationally accepted judicial doctrines and simple logic that I wonder whether the Court is still serving the interest of justice. The truth is, I have consulted many lawyers and even a constitutionalist, and not one has taken the side of the Supreme Court on its ruling on the cases involving the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco)

Let me cite just one of a number of judicial doctrines which the Court had disregarded so as not to clutter the issue.

That the Supreme Court is not a trier of facts, as Justice Jose Vitug pointed out in his dissenting opinion, should have been observed in the Piatco cases. Instead of remanding it to the lower courts, however, the Supreme Court tried these cases no matter that they involved a lot of unestablished facts, the determination of validity of which should have rightfully fallen under the jurisdiction of the lower courts.

The ruling majority cursorily threw out the contrary position of the dissenting opinion of the minority and our own lawyers, with a very simplistic explanation that "these cases are of transcendental importance as they involve the construction and operation of the country's premier international airport."

What was involved in these cases was the construction of a terminal which most government officials, including the President, did not even think important enough to start operations on time. Why then should it be that important to merit violations of long-standing and internationally accepted judicial doctrines?

The transcendental importance of this case lies not on the value of Naia Terminal 3 but on the fact that the whole world is observing how the Supreme Court of the Philippines will dispense justice on these cases that involve the biggest exposure in the country of foreign investors and contractors in a single project. This concern should have compelled the Supreme Court to observe the rules instead of setting them aside.

In its desire to quickly settle the Naia 3 cases, the high court set aside the right of Piatco to a balanced evaluation of the case by all the levels of the judiciary. Is Piatco's right to due process not enough reason to observe the doctrine on the hierarchy of courts?

—**GUILLERMO CUNANAN,**
general manager,
Naia Terminal 3 Project,
g.cunananph@writeme.com

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
LETTERS

CWL disclaimer on celibacy

THE CATHOLIC Women's League Philippines (CWL) vehemently denies the statement of Juliana Bueno of the CWL Archdiocese of Cotabato City that appeared in the INQUIRER last June 10 titled, "CWL bats for priests marrying." The views and sentiments are Bueno's and not those of the CWL's.

CWL Philippines strongly supports the stand of the Catholic Church on celibacy for the clergy.

—**ALICIA D. GANZON,**
national president,
Catholic Women's League
Philippines Inc.,
1141 Maria Orosa St.,
Ermita, Manila

More to lose than gain in running

IF President Macapagal-Arroyo won't mind a piece of unsolicited advice, she should not run next year. The main reason is she has much more to lose than to gain.

Firstly, the election would be a referendum on her presidency. If she loses, her place in history would be reduced to insignificance. Her administration will always be linked to President Estrada with whom she had enjoyed good rapport until the opportunity arose to push him overboard.

If she turns her back on her word not to run, Ms Macapagal would go down in history as the worst opportunist among Filipino leaders of the 20th century. People will not forget, for instance, her somersaults from one party to another when she ran for the Senate and vice presidency.

Secondly, if she ran and lost, her presidency would always be clouded with illegitimacy that could well be grounds for her criminal prosecution.

However, Ms Macapagal has the best opportunity to move on as a statesman and leave a lasting legacy by devoting her best efforts to amend the Constitution and renouncing any ambition thereafter. There are at least three overwhelming advantages of a parliamentary government that could be Ms Macapagal's legacy vis-à-vis the present presidential system, as follows:

1. There is collective responsibility for government policies and programs of the ruling party or coalition. Today, a parochially minded member of Congress can sponsor a bill that could be enacted into law and potentially become a debilitating policy or program.

2. Under a parliamentary system, a member of the ruling party or coalition cannot just sponsor a bill in Congress. He has to submit the proposal to his party caucus, which will submit it further to the coalition that might be running the government before the idea could be embodied in a parliamentary bill.

3. It's possible to continue a good policy or program over several election cycles with almost automatic repeal of a bad one. Since the Filipino's political orientation will most likely require a coalition to run the government, it's a no-brainer to even suggest that the parties or a coalition would be so inutile to act instantly when a program, for instance, is wreaking havoc on the country. The truth is, the prime minister cannot allow such a situation or he'll risk a no-confidence motion and loss of his post.

Cast upon the above advantages and the debilitating effects of our presidential system, President Macapagal should be able to mobilize the majority of our people to amend the Constitution.

—**FRANK WENCESLAO;**
92 Mindanao Ave.,
Quezon City.

Some holidays should never be moved

I AM writing about the transfer of the June 12 non-working holiday to June 13 in order to provide a long weekend holiday.

I understand the holiday economics of our President and in some ways, it is beneficial to our tourism industry. It also provides sufficient rest and time for family life among our Filipino workers. The idea must have been taken from the United States where holidays are usually moved to either a Monday or a Friday so that there would be a long weekend.

However, as far as I can remember, there are holidays that are not moved because of their historical significance. I remember July 4 in particular.

I am afraid that moving the June 12 holiday to another day could only diminish the already little sense of history we have. There are important things in life that we cannot just sacrifice for the sake of economics.

—**OLIVER TUAZON,**
omtuazon@up.edu.ph

No money to implement laws

LAST Saturday, June 7, I watched the TV program "Magandang Gabi Bayan" which tackled, among other things, the issue of our endangered species (mostly birds) not getting the attention it deserves from the government, specifically the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

I would like to inform the program's hosts, Julius Babao and Katherine de Castro, that the problem probably lies in the fact that the DENR through the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau, is still in the process (as of March 17, 2003) of drafting the implementing rules and regulations of RA 9147, "An Act Providing for the Conservation and Protection of Wildlife Resources and their Habitats, Appropriating Funds therefor and for other Purposes." This was signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo in July 2001 or 23 months ago.

Another important question that should be asked is: Was RA 9147 provided a budget in the 2003 General Appropriations Act? We all know for a fact that no law can be implemented without the necessary appropriations, more popularly known as M-O-N-E-Y. As a Cabinet official of the past administration pointed out, we have hundreds of laws passed by the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th Congress that remain unimplemented simply because the government does not have the money.

—**PAUL R. MORTEL,**
MBLA Court, Malanday,
Marikina City

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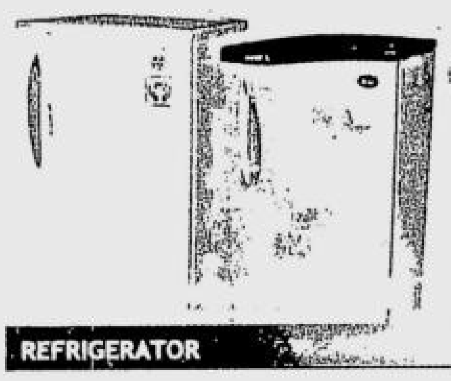

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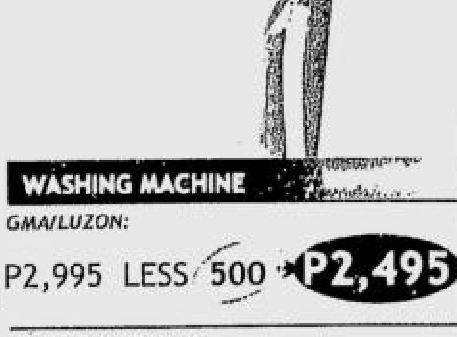

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Burma to free Suu Kyi after things normalize

PHNOM PENH—Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi will be freed but only after the situation in the country has returned to normal, Burmese Foreign Minister Win Aung said on Sunday.

Win Aung, who is in the Cambodian capital, for a meeting of Asia-Pacific leaders, said he could not give an exact date when Suu Kyi might be released.

He also spoke of assassination plots but was vague about who might be the target.

"There were some assassins going around the country," he said. "I don't know whom their targets were, our leaders? But if anything happened to her it will be blamed on us."

The Nobel laureate was taken into what Win Aung called protective custody after clashes between her supporters and followers of the military government in the north of the country on May 30.

"I cannot say how soon, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow or when, but we can assure you one thing—that we are working to bring back the situation to normal," he told reporters after a meeting with Cambodian Foreign Minister Hor Namhong.

The military government would press on with efforts toward national reconciliation despite the incident on May 30 while Suu Kyi was on a tour of the country to see supporters that Win Aung said had sparked fears of anarchy reminiscent of 1988.

That year, pro-democracy demonstrators supporting Suu Kyi were brutally crushed by troops in the capital, Rangoon, and an unknown number of people were killed.

Suu Kyi was not being detained, Win Aung said.

"Let us not call it detention. What we would like to say is that for the time being we protect her from personal harm," he said, adding that the government would be the first to be blamed if any harm befell the Nobel Peace Prize winner for her campaign to bring democracy to her homeland.

UN envoy Razali Ismail met Suu Kyi at the junta's headquarters in Rangoon last Tuesday and said she was in good health and good spirits.

Much work was going on behind the scenes to solve the problems, said Win Aung, but he declined to give details.

"Aung San Suu Kyi will be free again of course," he said, adding that she was always under the protection of government security guards even though she sometimes refused their presence.

"We have to protect her because we know that whatever happened to her will be real trouble to us because everything will be blamed on us," he said. *Reuters*

Mahathir warns of power struggle

KUALA LUMPUR—Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has expressed fears of a possible power struggle in Malaysia's ruling party after he retires in October, a newspaper reported Sunday.

His comments come ahead of a crucial week for the ruling United Malays National Organization (Umno), which is set to hold its annual congress amid much debate over how politics will evolve after Mahathir's 22-year rule ends.

Mahathir, who is Umno's president, warned that candidates might jostle for key party posts after he steps down, but said no one would likely challenge his deputy, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, whom he has picked as his successor.

"What I'm afraid of is a (power) struggle," Mahathir said in an interview with the Utusan Malaysia newspaper. "I don't think (Abdullah) will be challenged, but there will be a struggle on other levels."

"The No. 2 position in Umno has not been settled, so there will be a bit of a struggle for the No. 2 position," Mahathir was quoted as saying in a transcript of the interview published by the newspaper.

Umno, which represents Malaysia's ethnic Malay Muslim majority and has formed the core of every government since the country's independence from Britain in 1957, leads a coalition that includes parties representing the large ethnic Chinese and Indian minorities.

The contest for president and deputy president of Umno is crucial because the incumbents traditionally hold the top two government posts.

But Umno party elections will not be held before Mahathir retires, and probably won't take place until next year, so Abdullah could select a deputy unchallenged until then.

Potential front-runners for the deputy's post include Defense Minister Najib Abdul Razak and Muhyiddin Yassin, the domestic trade minister.

Abdullah said Sunday he shared Mahathir's concerns about a power struggle, but stressed that many party officials have assured him of their support in preventing any party split.

Abdullah, quoted by the national news agency Bernama, indicated he would only name a deputy once he takes over from Mahathir. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Iran blasts US

TEHRAN—Iranian officials closed ranks on Sunday to criticize the United States for backing a series of pro-democracy demonstrations after thousands staged a fifth night of protests in Tehran. There were reports of smaller demonstrations in at least two other cities, a sign that the momentum of the protests, which Washington have hailed as a cry for freedom, may be gathering pace. Iran's foreign ministry accused the United States of "flagrant interference in Iran's internal affairs" and said the significance of the protests was being deliberately overstated by US officials. "The Americans ignore the presence of millions of people to welcome the Supreme Leader and President, but they call the protests of a few individuals the voice of the people," foreign ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi said in a statement. *Reuters*

US, France trade barbs

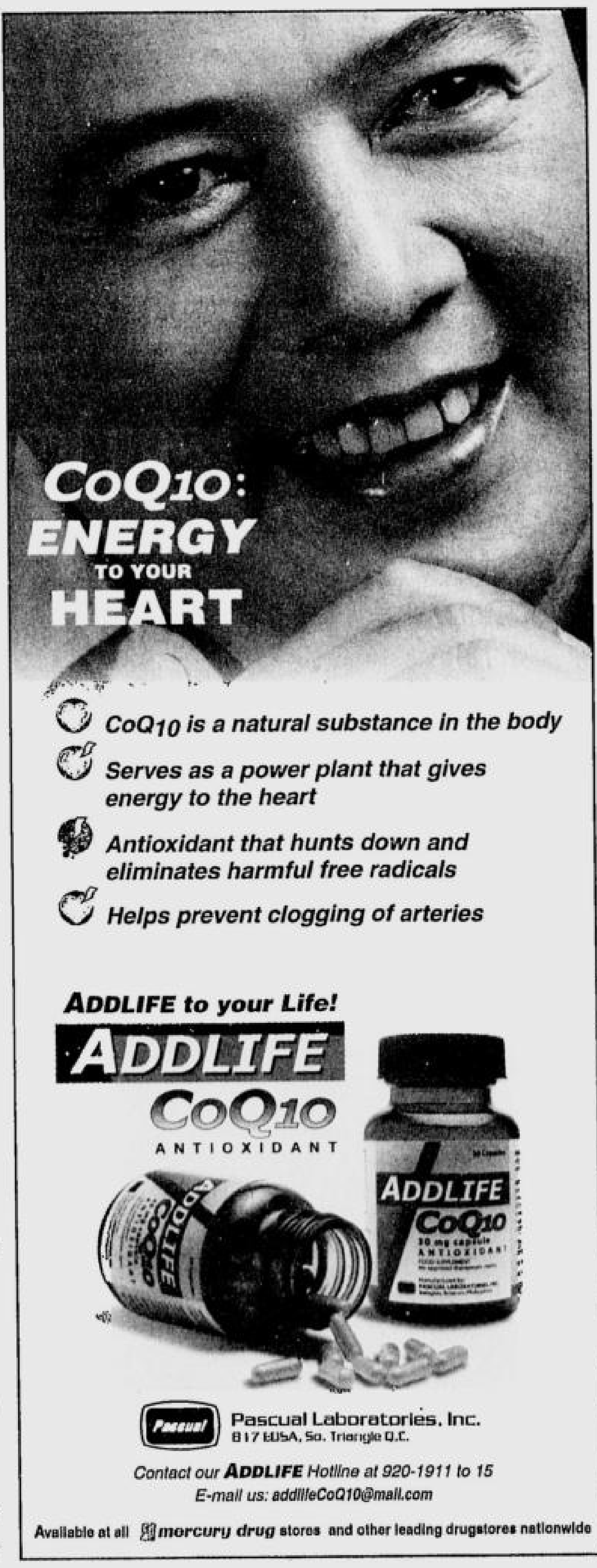
WASHINGTON—The US and French defense establishments have traded new barbs, as a chill that crept into their relationship in advance of the Iraq war continued to dog efforts to engineer a détente between the old-time allies. The opening shot was fired Saturday by French Defense Minister Michele Alliot-Marie, who accused her US counterpart, Donald Rumsfeld, of espousing a US-centered vision of the world. "The American defense secretary believes that the United States is the only military, economic and financial power of the world," she the French newspaper Le Monde. "We don't share this vision." The US rejoinder was quick in coming. "The French defense minister is entitled to her own opinion," replied Pentagon spokesperson Jim Turner. "However, her opinion does not accurately characterize the policy or position of the secretary of defense, or the position of the US government." *AFP*

Journalist seeks guarantees

JAKARTA—The United States has asked Indonesia to guarantee the safety of an American journalist, who is believed to be hiding in a rebel stronghold in the war-torn province of Aceh, a US Embassy spokesperson said Sunday. Indonesia set a Saturday deadline for William Nessen, a freelance reporter and photographer, to report to a military post in Aceh, where troops are battling rebels from the Free Aceh Movement. But Nessen told The Jakarta Post by telephone Saturday that he would not leave a rebel hideout in northern Aceh until "the (military) and the Indonesian government guarantee that I can leave the country without being arrested, interrogated or stopped." *AP*

Warning on diabetes

NEW ORLEANS—One in three US children born in 2000 will become diabetic unless many more people start eating less and exercising more, a scientist with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention warns. The odds are worse for black and Hispanic children: nearly half of them are likely to develop the disease, said Dr. KM Venkat Narayan, a diabetes epidemiologist at the CDC. "I think the fact that the diabetes epidemic has been raging has been well known to us for several years. But looking at the risk in these terms was very shocking to us," Narayan said. *AP*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Israel agrees to partial pullout in Gaza

JERUSALEM—Israel will pull its troops out of some areas of the Gaza Strip and hand over security to Palestinian officials as part of an effort to revive peace moves badly damaged by a week of bloody violence, an Israeli official said Sunday.

The difficulty of ending the violence was underscored early Sunday by a firefight between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians in the Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, one of the areas Israel reportedly planned to leave, that killed one Palestinian and wounded seven others.

Maj. Gen. Amos Gilad, a senior Israeli defense ministry official, presented Israel's withdrawal plan to Palestinian security chief Mohammed Dahlan during a meeting late Saturday, an Israeli official said on condition of anonymity.

It was the first such meeting since a June 4 summit in Jordan, where US President George W. Bush helped launch the "road map" peace plan, which calls for an end to 32 months of violence and the creation of a Palestinian state by 2005.

"It was positive, and there was a possibility of progress," Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath said of the meeting. However, everything depended on the Palestinians getting militant groups to agree to end attacks on Israelis, he added.

A high-level delegation of Egyptian security officials planned to arrive in Gaza on Sunday to meet with Hamas officials to discuss such an agreement. Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas was expected to attend the talks.

Since the road map was launched, renewed violence—capped by a bus bombing by Hamas and a string of Israeli helicopter raids aimed at Hamas leaders—has killed 64 people.

In the first phase of the plan, Palestinians are to stop attacks against Israelis and disarm militants, and Israel is to dismantle many of the roughly 100 settlement outposts in the West Bank.

Last week, Israeli troops dismantled 10 uninhabited outposts. However, settlers set up four more outposts in recent days, Dror Etkes, an official with the Israeli group Peace Now, said Sunday.

US officials worked to salvage the peace plan. A team of 10 to 15 US officials, headed by US Assistant Secretary of State John Wolf, has arrived in the region to supervise implementation of the road map.

Dov Weisglass, an aide to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, was to meet Monday in Washington with Condoleezza Rice, Bush's assistant for national security, Israeli officials said.

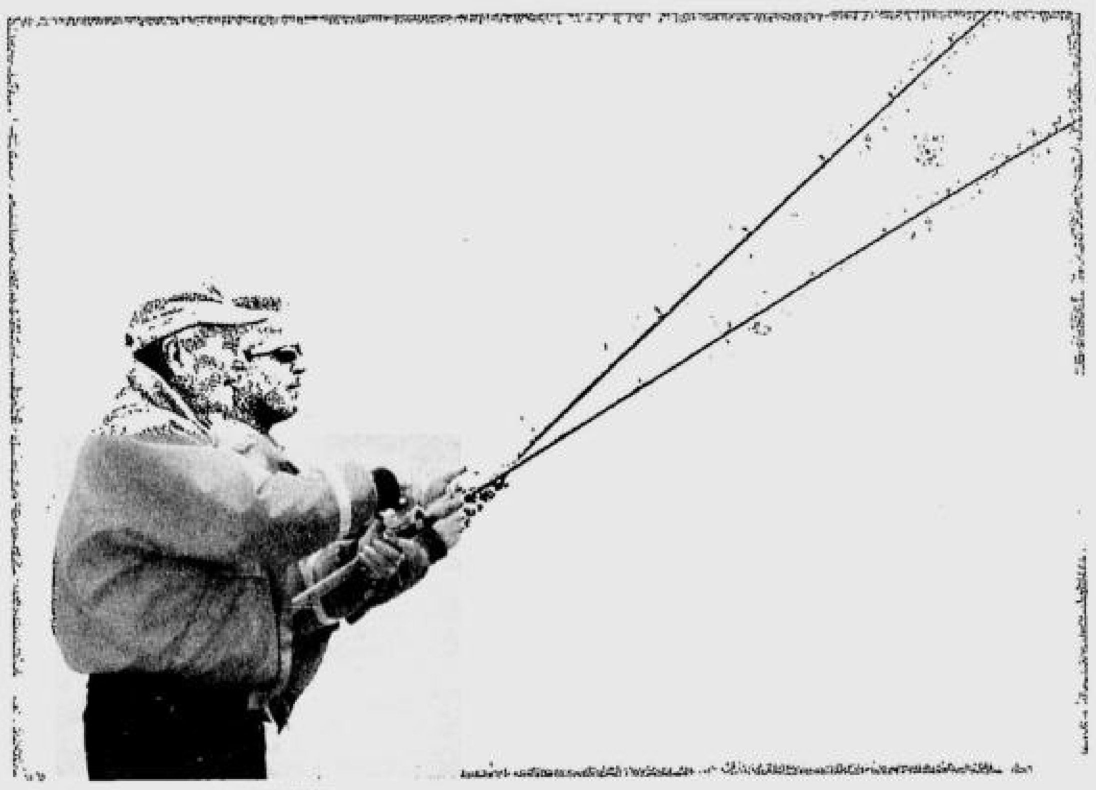
US Secretary of State Colin Powell and other senior representatives of the so-called Quartet—the United States, United Nations, Russia and the European Union—plan to hold talks in Jordan on Thursday.

Powell told a group of Arab Americans in Washington on Saturday the United States was committed to working toward peace in the region.

"If we don't move forward, if we don't take this opportunity, if we don't punch through this current wave of violence, then where are we?" he asked. "We're nowhere—with two peoples killing one another day after day after day."

As a first step, Israel offered at the meeting with Dahlan to withdraw from areas of northern Gaza, an Israeli official told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

If the Palestinians are able to prevent militants from launching homemade rockets from those areas into Israel, the Israelis will then gradually withdraw from the other areas of Gaza it occupied during the recent violence, Israeli media reported. *AP*



FISHING WITH FATHER

REUTERS

Former US President George Bush (front) fishes side by side with his son, US President George W. Bush, on June 14 off the coast of Kennebunk, Maine. The president is visiting his parents' home on the coast of Maine for five days as the family celebrates Father's Day and the elder Bush's 79th birthday.

New US operation launched in Iraq

BAGHDAD—US forces stepped up their battle against pro-Saddam Hussein loyalists and other opponents of their occupation, as a deadline for Iraqis to surrender weapons ran out Sunday with meager results.

US troops unleashed a new operation, code-named Desert Scorpion, overnight against forces in northern Iraq loyal to the ousted president, a coalition spokesperson said.

"It started last night, it is still ongoing," Sergeant 1st Class Brian Thomas said.

The operation came on the heels of Operation Peninsula Strike, a massive six-day US military assault in north-central Iraq to clamp down on pro-Saddam fighters that was brought to a close Thursday.

It left at least 113 people dead, including at least one foreigner, according to a tally from Iraqi witnesses and US officials.

The US military's Central Command said Peninsula Strike resulted "in the capture of approximately 400 detainees and the seizure of numerous weapon systems and ammunition. Approximately 60 of the detainees remain in custody."

American military officials said 31 fighters had been killed but reported no US deaths, following the largest military assault since President George W. Bush declared on May 1 that major combat was over in Iraq.

On Saturday, a Muslim leader from Rawa, a village close to the border with Syria, said that US forces killed 82 combatants at a desert training camp at nearby Sahl on Thursday.

Some of the fighters appeared to have been summarily executed, said Sheikh Gharbi Abdul Aziz, imam of the main mosque at Rawa.

Asked about the reports, Sergeant Thomas said: "We don't have anything. I can't comment on it." *AFP*

5 suspected terrorists killed in Saudi raid

MECCA, Saudi Arabia—Saudi troops and security agents raided a Mecca apartment building where terror suspects had holed up, killing five of the suspects, arresting seven—including one wearing a suicide bomb belt—and seizing a large cache of weapons, a Saudi newspaper reported Sunday.

Five police officers and security agents were killed in the Saturday night violence that started when traffic police tried to stop a car, according to the Okaz report.

Okaz did not say if any of the suspects had been linked to the May 12 suicide bomb attacks on Western residential compounds in the Saudi capital that killed 35 people, including nine Americans and nine Saudi suicide bombers. US and Saudi officials working together in the investigation have linked the Riyadh bombings to al-Qaida, the Muslim extremist terror network blamed for the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

Saudi interior ministry officials contacted by The Associated Press Sunday had no immediate comment on the Okaz report of violence in Mecca, Islam's holiest city, 720 km west of the capital. The ministry said an official statement on the raid would be issued later.

Another Saudi daily, Al-Riyadh, had a similar report from Mecca on Sunday. Saudi newspapers are independent but government guided.

Security was tight on the outskirts of Mecca Sunday, with troops stopping cars for searches and to check drivers' identification. A number of police patrolled inside and outside Mecca's Al-Nur hospital, where those wounded in the raid had reportedly been taken. *AP*

Rockets fired at Future TV building

BEIRUT—Unknown assailants fired two rockets from a parked car on Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's Future TV building early Sunday, causing extensive damage to one of the news studios, the station and the information minister said. There were no casualties.

The attack on the building, which also houses the premises of Hariri's Orient Radio station, took place at 2230 GMT Saturday in an upscale, beachside west Beirut neighborhood, the station said.

Hariri inspected the wrecked studio in the morning but made no comments.

The rockets were fired from a white BMW with a forged license plate parked across from the TV building. The rockets started a fire that gutted one of the news rooms. A station worker managed to carry four large gas cylinders in the studio's kitchen away from the flames, the station said.

As an investigation was continuing and debris removed, Future TV was broadcasting as normal on both its satellite and earth channels Sunday.

Inspecting the site, Information Minister Michel Samaha condemned the attack saying "it reminded us of past tragedies." Lebanon's news media outlets, considered the liveliest and freest in the Arab world, were the targets of frequent attacks during the 1975-90 civil war. *AP*

Manifesto on Education and Poverty Reduction

Save Our Schools

Over 30 million Filipinos are poor, based on their present state of well-being and their standard of living.

The Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act (RA8425) says that this is so because their income falls below the poverty threshold, and that they "cannot afford in a sustained manner" to provide for their minimum basic needs for survival, security and empowerment. Survival and security pertain to food and nutrition, shelter, household income and personal safety.

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This school year, 17.2 million students – and their families – will continue to hope that the education they will get from our public schools can make them strong enough to eventually break the crippling bonds of poverty. This is public education's most daunting challenge, and one which Government cannot face alone.

Our public elementary and secondary school teachers have been grappling with formidable odds for decades as they perform their vital task of molding responsible, responsive and productive Filipinos. Our public schools can do so much more, but we must help them. Our public school teachers need our active support in terms of resources and affirmation.

An Education Revolution is in the air, and our teachers are at its wings.

It is a revolution that fights for quality education for all public elementary and secondary schools. It is a revolution that fights for an education system that values love and concern for family, community, country; education that goes beyond the basics of reading, writing, and 'rithmetic, and empowers citizens with purpose and vision. It is our best weapon against poverty.

Today, we sign this document to show our support for our teachers and for the Education Revolution.

Convenors of the SAVE OUR SCHOOLS (SOS) Multisectoral Advocacy Network, which was launched recently at the DepEd main office in Pasig City, include *(from left to right)* Aaron Lim of Manuel L. Quezon University, ex-education undersecretary Dindo Manhit of READ Foundation, Charmie Jyr Miraflor of Student Advocacy for Government Accountability, Mariano Piamonte of Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, Butch Hernandez of FWPPI or the Education Revolution, Emmanuel Sales of Philippine Normal University, Frank Dadural of Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Cris Delgado of the DLSU-Caucus on Poverty Reduction, Senator Teresa Aquino Oreta, Don Juan Bagatsing of the Active Youth Alliance, Education Undersecretary Ramon Bacani, Teresita Arriola of Philippine Elementary School Principals Association, Wilford Wong of SAGA, Loureli Siy of Philippine Association of Secondary School Administrators, Sister Nora Joson of St. Mary's Academy, ex-education secretary Erlinda Pefianco of SEAMEO-Innotech, Sister Jackie de Belen of RVM Sisters and Carol Porio of Fund Association to Private Education.

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Countdown for Justice

WAPILE

IT IS exactly 399 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

Project for tribes barred in John Hay

BAGUIO CITY—Ignoring a Malacañang poverty-alleviation program that would benefit John Hay's indigenous community, government agencies and the Bases Conversion Development Authority asserted their control over the former US military reservation in order to contain expanding Ibaloi settlements there.

BCDA security teams, with trained bomb-sniffing dogs in tow, barred the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples on Thursday and Friday from surveying lands inside John Hay.

The lands are being considered for the first Baguio ancestral domain title.

Teresita Deles, presidential adviser on poverty alleviation, had identified Barangay Happy Hallow, an Ibaloi settlement located inside the John Hay forestland, as a Kalahi beneficiary, NCIP officials said.

Kalahi is a flagship program that requires government agencies to funnel their resources at improving beneficiary communities.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has been invited to visit the Ibaloi community next week, once the National Anti-Poverty Commission, which Deles coordinates, inaugurates Happy Hallow's Kalahi project.

Happy Hallow is among 11 John Hay villages, which BCDA has agreed to relinquish from its control.

Leilene Carantes-Gallardo, NCIP Cordillera director, said both the BCDA and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources appeared to have reasserted their territorial authority over the former American baseland.

"We had a legitimate work order when we began the (Happy Hallow) survey, but my surveyors were stopped by BCDA personnel, who used their dogs on my men," she said. "I ordered them to pull out (to avoid a confrontation with BCDA)."

Officials of the John Hay Management Corp. (JHMC), estate managers of the John Hay Special Economic Zone, have not issued any statement. The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach BCDA Chair Florencio Padernal.

The proposed Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) that the Ibaloi folk in Happy Hallow have applied for is a contentious issue.

City officials have been careful about endorsing the development of Baguio ancestral land claims because of a provision in the 1997 Indigenous Peoples Rights Act that excludes the city from ancestral land coverage.

But the NCIP is processing more than 700 Ibaloi land claims, based on historical and anthropological accounts.

Last June 12, the DENR and BCDA also cracked down on an Ibaloi foundation, which had secured a John Hay lot as a display area for Ibaloi houses built according to indigenous architectural specifications.

The Solomon Carantes Center for Art, Living Traditions and Environment Foundation Inc. (Solomon CALT) had set up shop on John Hay land that was supposed to have been issued a certificate of ancestral land title (CALT) in 2001, said Andrew Carantes, a foundation official.

Carantes said the foundation assembled four versions of the Ibaloi "Bal-ey (homes)" at a 9.4-hectare John Hay land which the NCIP had certified as his late father, Solomon's, ancestral land property.

The foundation plans to develop an Ibaloi artists' village in the area near the DENR's environment research and development service office, to propagate Ibaloi indigenous artifacts and culture.

But Isaias Barongan, DENR-Cordillera director, ordered the foundation to remove the huts for violating local building codes.

In a June 12 memorandum, Barongan told Carantes that he has no permit when he entered the property on June 10.

But Carantes said: "We have a business permit and a legitimate clearance from the Securities and Exchange Commission, but we did not need a building permit. These huts are for sale. They are not permanent fixtures on our ancestral property." *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

PARENTS volunteer to fix the school desks in Pangasinan in preparation for today's start of classes.

RAY ZAMBRANO

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Parents, teachers repair, paint 542 public schools

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BINALONAN, Pangasinan—When schools open today, elementary and high school students of the province's eastern area will be studying in newly repaired and repainted classrooms.

For this, they have to thank their parents, teachers, school administrators and community residents who have tapped their *bayanihan* (cooperative) spirit to make the school buildings and grounds look brighter and better places to study in.

Waiting for funds

Juliana Laoag, schools division superintendent, said she knew that waiting for funds from the government for school building repairs could take forever, so she asked the residents if they were willing to help so that the 542 public schools would be ready for the opening of classes today.

The project, called "Brigada Eskuwela," was initiated by the division office, turning the last days of summer a grand march among teachers, parents and members of the community to make sure the schools are ready for the schoolchildren.

Leaking roofs

"First, we invited them to the schools, for them to see the state of the school buildings where the young people would be studying. We showed them the leaking roofs, the broken windows and chairs and dilapidated desks. Then we showed them the repair plans and the materials needed," Laoag said.

The parents responded enthusiastically. "They came, they saw and they did much," Laoag said.

When the Brigada Eskuwela was launched on May 19, the parents and the residents trooped to the schools armed with a hammer and a kilo of nail, a piece of galvanized iron, a brush and a tin of paint, some pieces of wood, and other construction materials.

Free labor

Those who could not afford to buy any construction material volunteered to work for free, making use of their skills as carpenters, plumbers, or electricians.

From May 19 to 23, the 454 elementary and 88 high schools became a beehive of construction activities. A total of 45,170 people volunteered as construction workers and helpers.

The work included cleaning of classrooms, refurbishing of desks, painting or repainting of walls, replacing leaking roofs, repairing the electrical wiring and fixing the water systems.

Many others brought snacks and lunch packs which they all shared with the other parents.

Cost of volunteerism

When the dust finally settled and the schools spic and span, the division computed the cost of the construction materials and the labor contributed.

The amount: A cool P2,244,548.60, not an insignificant savings for the government.

Ninety percent of the amount was the worth of the materials (which were all listed), while the 10 percent was the value of labor, calculated at P200 a day.

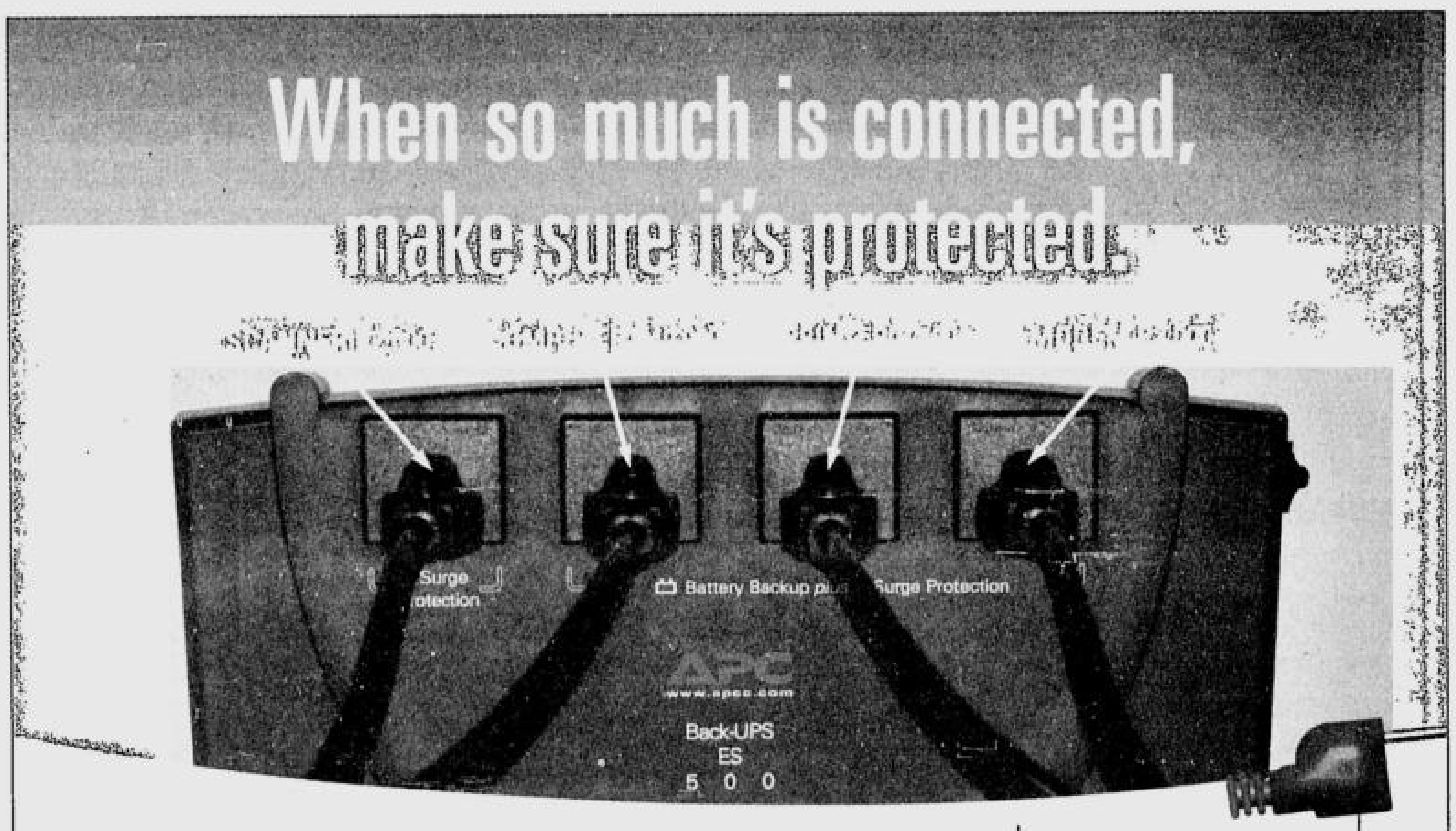
Laoag said the amount reported was only "partial" because construction materials continued to trickle in for the minor repairs.

"Because of the enthusiasm and cooperation shown by the people of Pangasinan Division II, we have decided to make Brigada Eskuwela a year-round project, and the parents may contribute whatever they can to the schools," she said.

The project showed that the "bayanihan" spirit is still alive among Pangasinenses. Further, it brought the parents, teachers and administrators closer to one another.

The division also launched the "Brigada Opisina," aimed at improving the parking space of the division officer in this town.

But for this project, the school administrators asked the help of politicians and big businessmen.



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*1. Contingency Planning Research.

Pampanga dad linked to 'jueteng' suspended for absenteeism

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A city councilor, who is also suspected of financing jueteng operations in Angeles City, had been absent in all 65 sessions of the council in the last 17 months from January last year to May this year, documents showed.

The council, through Resolution 2002-134, suspended Councilor Mario Garcia for 60 days from February to March this year. His salary for two months was also withheld.

These moves came as the Local Government Code of 1991 and the city council's internal rules of procedures gave the council the power to censure, reprimand, exclude from the session, suspend for 60 days or expel its members for "disorderly behavior and absences without justifiable cause for four consecutive sessions."

The council, in the same resolution, said Garcia's absences were "unexplained and unjustified" and noted that these had "caused several indictments and criticisms from different sectors of the city and thereby besmirched the integrity of the august body."

According to the council, the suspension was meant to "indemnify" the residents whom Garcia was "bound to serve."

Garcia, also known in jueteng circles as Marga, was among the councilors who garnered the most number of votes during the May 2001 elections.

Until his suspension, he was chair of the peace and order committee, which is considered crucial for a city that has reportedly one of the highest crime rates in Pampanga.

Despite his absences, Garcia "still received his salaries up to Dec. 31, 2002," according to the council in a letter to Jesulito Supan, city director of the Department of Interior and Local Governments.

Although the suspension period had lapsed, he continued not to report for work. Attendance sheets of regular or special sessions did not indicate that Garcia had filed a leave of absence since April.

Councilor Ramon Cabral Jr. proposed a resolution asking the council's rules and ethics committee to conduct a "fact-finding investigation in aid of legislation for the continued absences" of Garcia.

Cabral did not immediately suggest an expulsion of Garcia.

Rodolfo Feraren, DILG Central Luzon director, said his office does not have the power to impose sanctions on an erring official.

He said the power to punish members for unauthorized absences is "exclusively vested before the concerned Sanggunian."

Garcia could not be reached for comments. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Mangyan folk displaced in aftermath of killings

CALAPAN CITY—The murders of human rights activist Eden Marcellana and peasant leader Eddie Gumatoy last April has resulted in the displacement of more than 100 children and adults from several Mangyan communities, according to a National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) official.

NCIP legal officer Roberto Almonte said the displaced Mangyan folk have been provided with temporary shelters and food by the Church, local governments and NCIP.

Some of the displaced claimed that they were included in the Army's "Order of Battle" and subjected to random interrogations by the military.

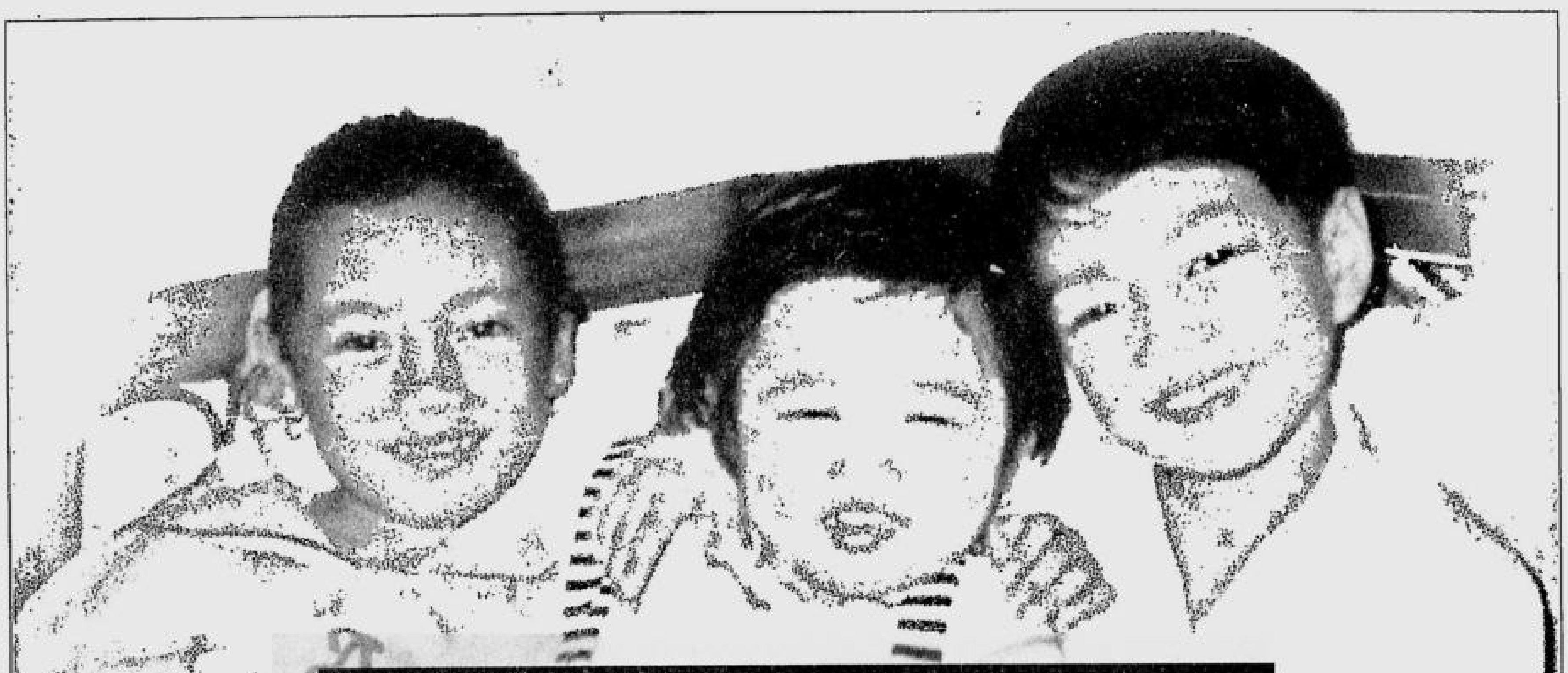
Not one of those interviewed by the INQUIRER consented to be identified for fear of harassment.

They also alleged that despite the presence of soldiers in their areas, they still feared for their lives.

They added that they were afraid to be caught again in the crossfire in case of military-NPA encounter.

"We hope that the anti-insurgency campaign will soon be over so we could go back to our normal peaceful lives," they said.

"They are the most vulnerable sector of society and should be extended urgent attention by the government," Almonte said. *Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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PDI 6/16/03

Gov orders probe of missing funds

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Sarangani Gov. Miguel Escobar ordered an investigation of the alleged disappearance of a P400,000-fund meant for tribal cooperatives in Glan town.

Escobar's order came after tribal residents of Barangay Datal Bukay complained that they have not received a single centavo out of the amount.

He created a three-man probe body led by Provincial legal officer Antonio Delia "to get to the bottom" of the shaping fund scam.

The governor told Delia to come up with the result within 10 days.

At least five employees, including a daughter of Vice Gov. Felipe Constantino, would be grilled about the missing fund.

Earlier this year, the provincial government set aside P1.2 million for assistance to tribal cooperatives in the province.

The fund was supposed to have been given to the Datal Bukay Minorities Development Cooperative (DBMDC) led by Domingo Blatang.

Two weeks ago, the provincial accountant ordered Blatang "to liquidate" the P350,000 he received from the government.

Provincial treasurer Cesar Cagang said the amount was released through the Office of the Vice Governor.

But a surprised Blatang said he has nothing to account for because he did not receive such amount.

Blatang said there was no cooperative named DBMDC in the village and that his group is called the B'laan-Manobo-Kagampon De Tana (Blama-Kadeta).

When he was shown the checks he supposedly cashed, Blatang disowned the signature appearing as the endorser.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Bomb ingredients seized in NPA camp

By Carla P. Gomez, *PDI Visayas Bureau*

BACOLOD CITY—The Army's 11th Infantry Battalion on Thursday found ingredients and equipment for the production of homemade bombs and explosives from a seized New People's Army camp near the boundary of Guihulngan, Negros Oriental and Isabela, Negros Occidental.

Col. Gregorio Fajardo, 11th IB commanding officer, on Saturday said the bomb materials could be assembled into homemade claymore and anti-personnel mines and explosives for use in toppling electrical towers.

Claymore mines are also used in destroying military armored personnel carriers.

"It is normal for a terrorist group to use bombs in inflicting injuries and destruction of properties," Fajardo said.

He added that the making of explosives could be part of the tactical offensives by the NPA in Negros Island.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines no longer uses the claymore and anti-personnel mines, in compliance with a provision of the Geneva Convention, which bans its use, Fajardo said.

The seized explosives materials consisted of 1,000 ball bearings for shrapnel, assorted chemicals, improvised battery packs, electrical switches, magnetic wires, a battery charger, 50 bolts, soldering iron and lead, flathead hammer, and five C-clamps or vice-clips, among others.

These are in addition to the 400 rounds of ammunition for an M-60 machine gun, a generator, LX-300 computer printer and an anti-government documents, which had been seized by 11th IB Charlie Company soldiers, when they took over the rebel camp in Barangay Balugo, Guihulngan.

Last year, the 66th Infantry Battalion also seized six kilograms of explosives also in Guihulngan.

Military investigation showed that the rebel training camp located in a dense forest and could not be detected from the air, was occupied by 50 armed men when the Tuesday raid took place.

Fajardo said they were still verifying information relayed to them by residents in the area that three rebels died and many were injured as indicated by bloodstains seen along their withdrawal routes.

Two Army soldiers sustained minor injuries in an hour-long gun battle with reported members of the NPA unit operating in central Negros.

'Egay' downs power lines, brings floods to Samar, Leyte

From page A1

and executive officer of the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC), said at least 13 families, composed of 91 people, who live near the riverbank in Barangay Aslum, Naval, Biliran, were evacuated due to the swelling of the river.

At nearby Biliran town, five families, composed of 25 people, in Barangay Binac were also evacuated to safer ground.

The displaced families, who were temporarily sheltered at the provincial gym, were given provisions by the provincial office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The power supply was interrupted in some parts of Biliran as falling trees hit transmission lines, according to Fuego.

In Leyte, a landslide was reported in Barangay Basud, Alemeria town, rendering the road impassable.

A Coast Guard team rescued three fishermen whose boat was being battered by strong waves in Cancabato Bay in Basey, Samar. All were residents of Barangay Costa Brava, San Jose District in Tacloban City.

In Northern Samar, the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council of Pambujan reported some flooding.

Flooding was also reported in Catarman.

Albay Gov. Al Francis Bichara urged the Provincial Disaster Management Office to strictly monitor flood-prone areas.

Weatherman Arispe said Bicol would continue to experience rainfall in the following days due to the southwest monsoon.

As of 10 a.m. Sunday, Signal No. 2 was raised over Samar, Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte and Polilio Island, while Signal No. 1 was hoisted over Masbate, Cagayan, Quirino, Aurora and Quezon. ***With reports from Joyce Mejillano, Emir Gamis and Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Gov't distance . . .

From page A1

mainstream the graduates of the program into the educational system," Jimenez said.

Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza said the program has no age limit.

"The target of the DLS program are those aged 7 to 77, (and include the) rural poor, indigenous peoples, urban poor and rebel returnees coming from the MILF, MNLF and from the CPP-NPA-NDF," he said. He was referring to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Moro National Liberation Front and the communist New People's Army.

Jimenez said the program would be initially implemented in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and in the Zamboanga Peninsula because of their high illiteracy and dropout rates.

The ARMM has the highest dropout rate in Mindanao, at 65.5 percent. Its illiteracy rate stands at 26.5 percent.

Western Mindanao has a dropout rate of 55.6 percent, while its illiteracy rate is 10.30 percent.

Jimenez said some 200 soldiers tapped to teach under the DLS would join the initial phase of the program. Eventually, however, the government will utilize retired school teachers, priests and lay workers, barangay health personnel and college students to act as "para-*guro*" (para-teachers).

She said other agencies would help implement the project.

Those joining the DLS program as teachers would be sent to the villages, instead of staying in designated areas and waiting for their students to come to them.

Seven of the techno-vans are being sent to the Zamboanga Peninsula; eight are to be deployed in the ARMM.

Durian new flavor in condoms

From page A1

150,000 pieces in the first few days.

Maybe Filipinos could be similarly roused, the AIDS Society of the Philippines (ASP) suggested.

During a recent workshop here for media practitioners, ASP project officer Josie de la Cruz said the local market for condoms could use a little more tickling.

Banana, mint, strawberry and chocolate flavors initially caused a stir, but have not been performing as potently as expected lately.

It was De la Cruz who broke the news of the durian's recent success to the workshop participants, citing a report circulated by an e-group advocating reproductive health.

The durian-scented condoms are distributed by DKT-Indonesia. DKT is an international manufacturer that practices socialized marketing by selling the contraceptives at very low cost in developing countries.

In the Philippines, DKT stepped up production last year after the US Agency for International Development stopped subsidizing the country's condom supply.

Party condoms

DKT-Philippines repackaged its Trust Condoms as a "classic" brand, and introduced Frenzy, which it playfully tagged "party condoms." Both labels come in the four flavors previously blended only in ice cream, yogurt, lip gloss and fancy stationery.

In Baguio supermarkets, Frenzy mint is currently the bestseller, followed by the strawberry variant.

Of course, durian is an acquired taste. Doubtless, Indonesians, Malaysians and Thais love it. Davaoeños, too—how else to explain durian cake, durian candy, durian milkshake, even durian cappuccino that are readily available in the southern city's malls?

Even so, the exotic, spiked fruit is not allowed inside Davao hotel rooms. And, according to a report quoting DKT-Indonesia, Americans and Europeans continue to describe the durian's smell as akin to "stale cheese, old gym shoes or a gas leak"—all fatal at some point.

DKT-Philippines figures show that it sold 25 million condoms in 2001 and that its sale has increased by 712 percent since the the early 1990s when the company started operations in the Philippines.

Not preferred

But according to the National Statistics Office, the condom is not the preferred contraceptive method for about 30,000 Filipino women of reproductive age who were interviewed for the 2002 Family Planning Survey. Only about 1.6 percent of the respondents said their partners used condoms regularly for birth control.

Pills and female sterilization, or tubal ligation, are still the top choices.

But the NSO said the use of modern family planning methods, including condoms, ligation, pills, vasectomy, intra-uterine devices, injectables and diaphragms—in short, nearly everything outside of the "natural methods" endorsed by the Catholic Church—generally went up in most regions.

Central Mindanao, Bicol, Central Visayas and the Cordillera registered the highest increases between 2001 and 2002. The highest figure, 50.1 percent, was recorded in the Cagayan Valley; and the lowest, 10.5, in the the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The ASP is advocating condom use because it is the only method that can also stop the spread of sexually transmitted infections like HIV-AIDS, syphilis and gonorrhea. That it could also generate renewed excitement for the durian is a seductive notion.

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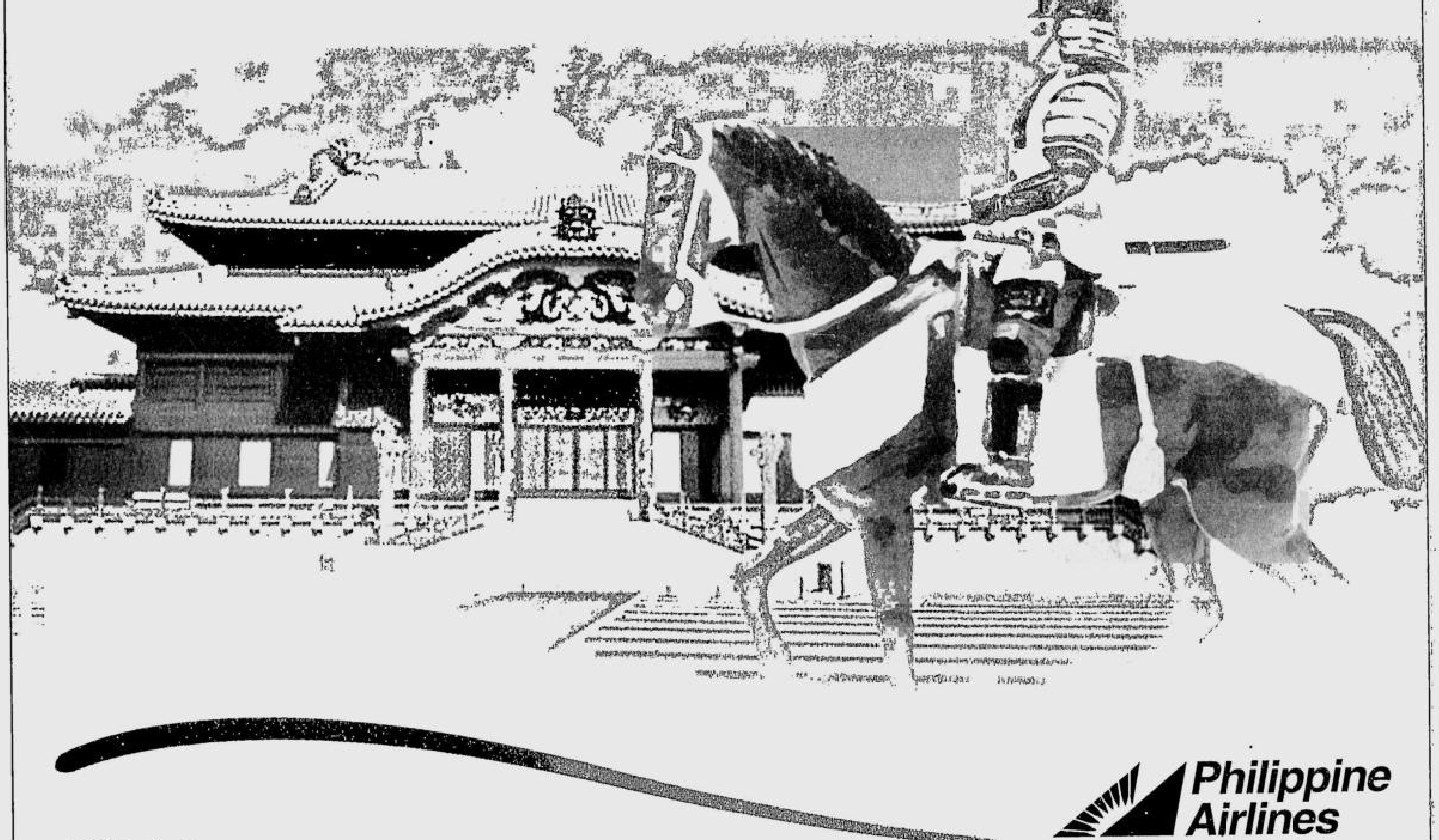

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Gawad Kalinga houses sprout in slum areas

From page A1

and energy?

"That's the miracle," said Melo Villaroman, a Gawad Kalinga director for South Sector B in Metro Manila.

Somehow, he said, funds just kept coming in, allowing the group not only to build houses to replace shanties but sustain scholarships, medical missions, learning centers and livelihood projects in the slum areas.

But the Gawad Kalinga is not a dole-out program, insist the volunteers of the program that was started by the Couples for Christ (CFC), a Catholic group.

The work is done through "*padugo*" (bleeding), a system in which each one shares what one can, which may come in the form of money, labor, services and materials.

No profit

Luis Oquiñena, national program coordinator, said a house only cost P50,000 to build because the Gawad Kalinga did not make any profit.

Architects do not charge professional fees, skilled workers charge a nominal fee, and most importantly, the residents help each other build their homes for free.

"You don't look at the money needed. You look at the effort. And it should come from us. We need to do our share," Oquiñena said.

Despite their busy careers and personal concerns, the CFC volunteers are not likely to abandon the program. Making time for community service has become second nature to them by now, according to Ted Estacio, the financial director in South B.

It was not easy at first.

Project director Francis Balagtas, who manages 2,000 workers in his company, said nothing prepared him for dealing with a slum community.

"Not only did it humble us. It taught us how to share, not out of excess but out of our own needs," he said.

Balagtas said the residents themselves had to believe they could improve their lives.

Oquiñena said the Gawad Kalinga set a big target—500,000 homes in five years—because it had shown others that the work could be done.

The program does not have to wait for foreign donations and government funds, he said.

There are now 170 Gawad Kalinga communities around the country, including 30 in Mindanao.

German village

Aside from local partners, the CFC has tapped members abroad who, in turn, organized foundations to sponsor a village.

That's why there is an "English village" in Sapang Palay in San Jose del Monte City in Bulacan, a "German village" in Bagong Silang, Quezon City, and the like, depending on the sponsor.

"What's more important than the houses is the community itself," Estacio said.

"Some used to say, 'Why did you help us? We didn't ask for your help'," Villaroman said. "We have to reach out to them."

As the Gawad Kalinga puts up new houses to replace the shanties, it is also demolishing the mindset that the poor are hopeless, according to Oquiñena.

"The solution really is sharing. Given a chance, the poor can also be good because they are no longer on survival mode," he said.

Habitat starts 'Peace Build' program

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The local chapter of the Habitat for Humanity has joined the peace process by building houses right within a former Moro rebel camp.

Boy Santiago, acting chair of Habitat here, said the program, dubbed "Peace Build," was aimed at helping Moro rebels return to a normal life by providing them with decent shelter.

The first batch of beneficiaries of Peace Build was a group of former members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in Barangay Bunao, a predominantly Muslim village about 1.5 km from Tupi, South Cotabato. The group was led by Commander Arsad Landasan.

The 1,400-hectare village, situated at the foot of the Roxas Mountain Range, used to be an MNLF stronghold at the height of the Moro insurgency in the 1970s.

When the MNLF signed a peace accord with the Philippine government in 1996, the Moro fighters laid down their arms and began tilling the land.

Caring hands and industry displayed by the former combatants transformed part of the the camp into farmland teeming with fruit-bearing trees like *lanzones, rambutan, durian, marang* and *macopa.*

On June 10, Habitat and its project partners—the United Nations Development Program, the municipal government of Tupi, the barangay council of Bunao, and the Bunao Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative—held groundbreaking rites for the housing project.

Forty former MNLF rebels were awarded houses and lots in a 7,500-square-meter property in the village. Each beneficiary will get a concrete house built on a 130-sq.m. lot. The total construction cost for the 40 housing units was placed at P1.2 million.

Acquisition of construction materials will be financed by Habitat, but the members will pay back the amount without interest. As counterpart, beneficiaries will provide the labor as well as sand and gravel during the construction.

Santiago said the construction of the houses would kick-off on July 8 with assistance from companies such as Caltex, Petron and the agricultural firm Cargill.

In filing impeach raps, it's go for broke for Erap

From page A1

ruled that Estrada had resigned the presidency and then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had legitimately taken over the highest office of the land.

Delaying tactics

The two motions for reconsideration from the ruling that Estrada filed were similarly denied with the same voting score. With the legitimacy issue put to rest, his lawyers then questioned the constitutionality of the Plunder Law. The tribunal, by a 10-4 vote, upheld its validity.

In between the two petitions, the lawyers filed various motions in the Sandiganbayan to, among others, disqualify the members of the third division of the anti-graft court from hearing the case for alleged bias against the accused and bar the Ombudsman from filing perjury charges on the ground that the Civil Service Commission is the proper office to undertake the investigation.

One year after the prosecution started the presentation of its evidence, Estrada dismissed his lawyers. He claimed he had lost faith in the judicial system. To prevent delay in the resolution of the case, the court appointed a panel of lawyers to represent him. Faced with an uncooperative client, the *pro bono* lawyers had to make do for 15 months with whatever documents were available to them.

After the prosecution rested its case in May, Estrada sprang a surprise by appointing lawyer Alan Paguia as his new counsel. His first move was to ask for the dismissal of the case on the ground that Estrada is still the duly elected President of the Philippines and therefore immune from suit. He cited excerpts of the book written by Supreme Court Justice Artemio Panganiban to support his argument that the justices violated the Constitution when they attended Ms Macapagal's oath-taking.

Impeach charges

Paguia has served notice that if the Sandiganbayan denies his motion, he will bring the matter up to the high tribunal [again!] for resolution. In other words, he will reprise the petition filed by Estrada in February 2001 questioning the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration.

In support of that motion, Estrada, through another lawyer, filed an impeachment complaint with the House of Representatives against eight justices of the tribunal. It is obvious the parallel moves are aimed at stalling the hearing of the plunder case and to resuscitate public attention to him.

It is doubtful if Estrada's latest maneuver in the graft court will prosper. The issue has been settled by the highest court of the land three times in a row, all in favor of President Macapagal. Even assuming that his arguments are valid, it is too late in the day for Estrada to question the legality of her assumption to office.

There has to be end to legal disputes. When the avenues of appeal have been exhausted, the last resolution of the tribunal on an issue becomes the law of the case. Right or wrong, that is the final word on the controversy.

And does Paguia expect the Sandiganbayan to summon the eight justices to explain their side on his accusations of partisanship in swearing to office Ms Macapagal?

In the judicial hierarchy, the anti-graft court is subordinate to the tribunal. The latter has the power to modify or set aside the decisions of the Sandiganbayan, not the other way round.

The situation that Paguia wants to happen may be likened to an undersecretary of a department overruling a decision earlier made by his superior. That would be inviting disorder in a system that depends on precedents and obedience to hierarchical authority for the effectivity of its actions.

Breakdown

The net effect of Paguia's motion and the impeachment complaint is to impair the credibility of the judiciary. Or create in the public's mind the impression that the institution that is supposed to check the excesses of the executive and legislative departments no longer deserves their respect.

Unlike the two branches of government, the judiciary has no army or money to make its presence felt. It relies on its moral authority for the enforcement of its decisions. Without that ascendancy, the institution becomes worthless.

The protection of the judiciary is farthest from Estrada's concerns. He has nothing to lose if the prestige of the judicial system goes to pot. With his disgraceful exit from public service and pending trial for a heinous crime, nothing would please him most than bring down with him the institution that helped put him in the hole he is in at present.

By impugning the justices' credibility, even if their impeachment does not prosper, Estrada is laying the groundwork for ascribing political motives if he is convicted of plunder. A guilty verdict will no doubt be appealed to the tribunal. He can cry vendetta if it affirms that decision.

The circus, with the willing participation of lawyers, continues.

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2 top MILF leaders elude gov't troops

From page A1

for Salamat, the 72-year-old MILF founder, to sit in the peace panel. Jaafar said Murad had Salamat's full trust—"which is the main reason why he was not in the panel."

He said Murad, as chief negotiator, spoke for and in behalf of the rebel group. "He is our chairman's alter ego as Secretary [Eduardo] Ermita is President [Macapagal] Arroyo's alter ego in the peace talks."

Ermita, the presidential adviser for the peace process, replaced Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza, who resigned as chief government negotiator after the Siocon attack in April.

Jaafar said even if Salamat joined the MILF peace panel, it would be difficult for him to come out in the open because of standing warrants against him and the P5-million bounty on his head.

Opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said as much. Pimentel, one of only two senators from Mindanao, said he was "disturbed by the inconsistency on the part of government who wants Salamat to head the peace panel and then (threatens) him with arrest."

"Unless he has lost his marbles, Salamat would not agree to this," the senator said in a phone interview. The government should assure Salamat by granting him a safe conduct pass.

But Pimentel said he still didn't find it necessary for the head of a rebel group to participate in actual peace negotiations. He noted that while Moro National Liberation Front leader Nur Misuari did participate in the peace talks with the Ramos administration, the talks were held outside the country.

"So there was no threat of him being arrested," he said.

Jaafar said the question of the warrants, issued after the bombings that hit the cities of Davao, Koronadal and Kidapawan this year, was not a precondition.

"If [Salamat] sits as panel chair, it would not fast-track the peace process," Jaafar said.

He said the peace talks were stalled "not because Brother Salamat did not chair the MILF panel but because the GRP is not serious in the implementation of all the previous agreements."

"The priority issue is finding a peaceful, but lasting, comprehensive and acceptable solution to the Mindanao problem. This should be the concern of everyone," he said.

But Ermita said the government was willing to consent to the lifting of the arrest warrants on Salamat.

In a telephone interview with reporters yesterday, Ermita said the government had to take "certain steps" in order for the judiciary to reconsider the issuance of the warrants. He said this was the only way that MILF leaders would agree to allow Salamat to head the peace panel.

Ermita, a former congressman and an ex-general, emphasized that the executive branch would not initiate any action to lift the warrants because "we will be contradicting ourselves."

"As Secretary Renato de Villa said, this is for the courts to determine and we have to follow certain judicial processes." De Villa, presidential adviser on strategic concerns, said Saturday the President wanted Salamat to head the MILF panel to ensure that all agreements would be binding.

In an interview with RMN yesterday, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the peace talks would be more "authoritative" if Salamat faced Ermita across the negotiating table.

Ermita admitted that he was not well-versed about how warrants can be lifted. He said the Department of Justice would be in the best position to answer the reporters' questions.

But he hinted that the lifting of the warrants would mean that the Davao bombing case would be reopened for investigation. "There could be another investigation to be conducted since warrants of arrest are normally issued after an investigation," Ermita said.

The issue of removing the bounty on Salamat and other MILF leaders, he said, was less difficult to solve. "If a political decision has been reached to let Salamat represent the MILF, we would submit a recommendation to the President to lift the prize on the head of the MILF leaders."

Ermita said that while the rebels were covered under a joint guarantee of immunity, "this does not preclude them from being charged if they commit a crime because we cannot go against our own laws."

Jaafar said the MILF central committee was only waiting for Malaysia's go signal before the rebel group takes part in the peace talks.

Jaafar admitted that the MILF had prepared a communication for Malaysia "signifying officially its desire to resume the stalled talks."

He said the MILF was expecting Malaysia to set the date and venue for the negotiations.

"[The MILF] has reconstituted its panel and (the government) is ready. The President has named a new panel chair, so we hope everything goes OK," Jaafar said. *With reports from Gil Cabacungan, Christine Avendaño; Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau; and AFP*

Alingod named press secretary

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo last night named veteran broadcast journalist Milton A. Alingod the new press secretary. Alingod replaced Hernani A. Braganza, who was appointed presidential adviser on political affairs.

Surprising Alingod during dinner at the Alson's Guest House in Iligan City, the President informed the erstwhile press undersecretary that she had just signed his appointment papers.

Alingod began his broadcast career as a radio writer in 1963 before moving to Channel 13 in 1967 where he became TV news director. He went on to become vice president for news of GMA-7. He was director of Radio-TV Malacañang when he was asked by Braganza to be one of his undersecretaries.

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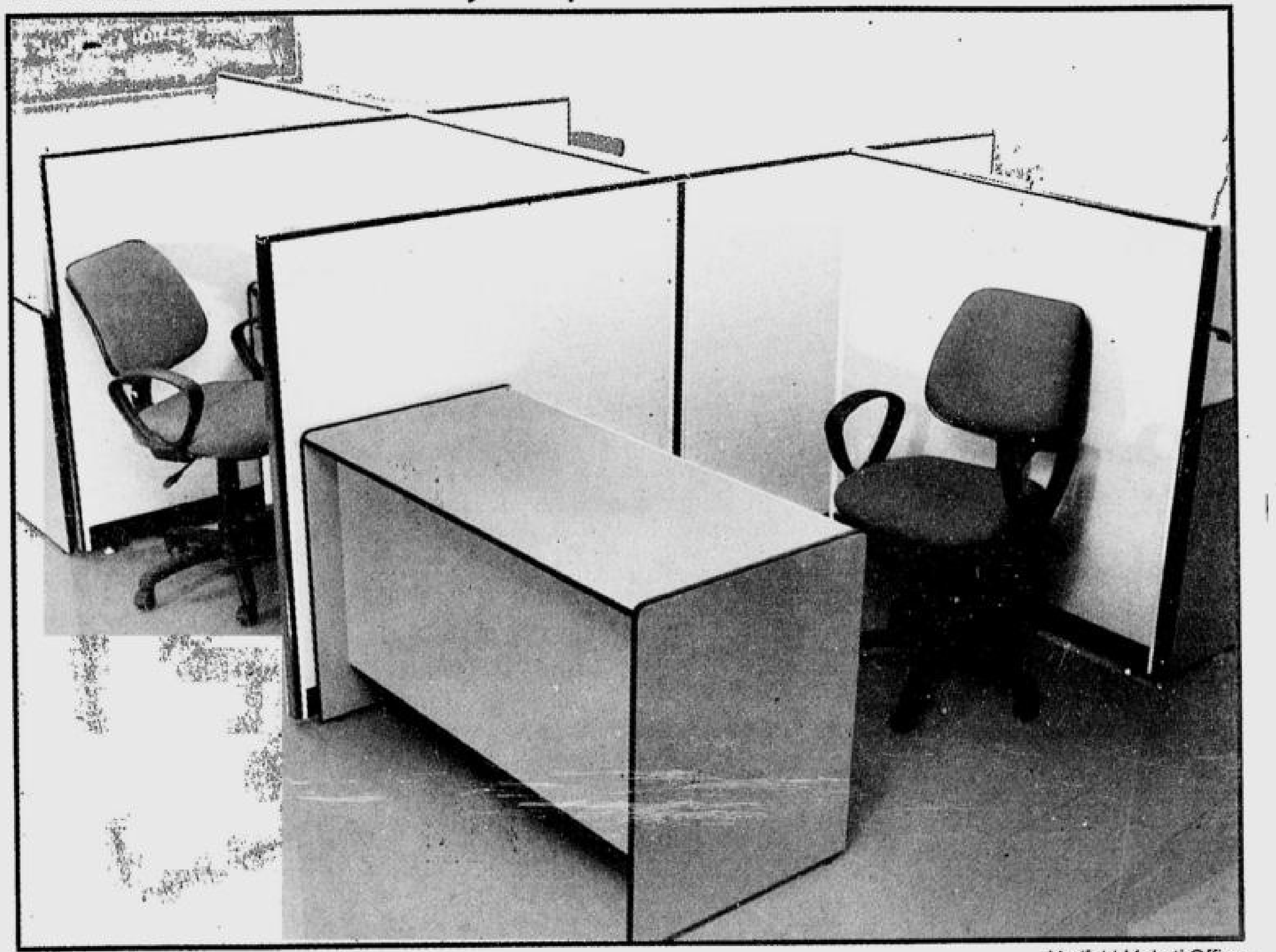

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Gov't, bakers launch Pinoy 'pan de sal' project

From page A1

tary for consumer industry and trade regulations, said the new standards would insulate the price of *pan de sal* from fluctuations in the price of wheat in the world market.

The price of flour in the local market is also heavily affected by the peso depreciation and the seasonal production and harvest, he said.

To make *pan de sal* and other products, local bakers use the so-called hard flour, which comes from spring wheat imported from the United States, Canada, Australia or China. The wheat is ground and processed in 12 flour mills throughout the country.

San Miguel Purefoods Inc. was the first company to produce a flour mix for the Pinoy Pandesal project. Named Harina de Pandesal, the flour mix was approved by the DTI, the bakers' group and the Bureau of Food and Drugs. It is P30 to P40 cheaper than imported flour, which costs as high as P520 per bag.

Hernandez said other flour millers could create their own flour mixes that would meet the P1, 25-gram standard.

The Pinoy Pandesal is boosted with Vitamin A and free from bromate, a chemical that bakers commonly used as preservative and which health authorities later found to cause cancer after long-term consumption.

Hermosura said bakers needed to add only water and salt (preferably iodized salt) as flavor ingredients.

The dough is mashed and cut by machine into pieces weighing initially 27.5 grams each. The pieces are placed inside the oven heated at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 12 to 15 minutes.

Adopting standards for the *pan de sal* entailed a "personal sacrifice" for the bakers, Hermosura said. Early this year, he said, President Macapagal-Arroyo expressed alarm that price increases and unregulated variations in the quality of the bread were making it beyond the reach of poor families.

'Pinoy bread'

"Fortifying a product is supposed to be an additional cost. But we bakers have decided to make a social obligation by shouldering this ourselves in order to give the Filipinos a healthy and affordable *pan de sal*," he said.

Hermosura, who owns a bakery in Taglibaran City, said regulating the price, weight and ingredients would make the bread more affordable to the people, especially the poor.

He said a standard *pan de sal* would be popularized locally and abroad as the staple "Pinoy bread," similar to French bread and American bread.

The bakers would peg the price at P1 "for as long as they can manage," he said, but he added that they would be allowed to alter the prices of other kinds of bread that they sell to recover whatever extra cost they incur in producing the Pinoy Pandesal.

They would also be allowed to set their own prices for their own special *pan de sal*, Hermosura said.

"It's okay if we derive only small profit from maintaining the price and size of *pan de sal* for as long as there's no [price] control in our other products."

Local bakers were happy with the introduction of the standards.

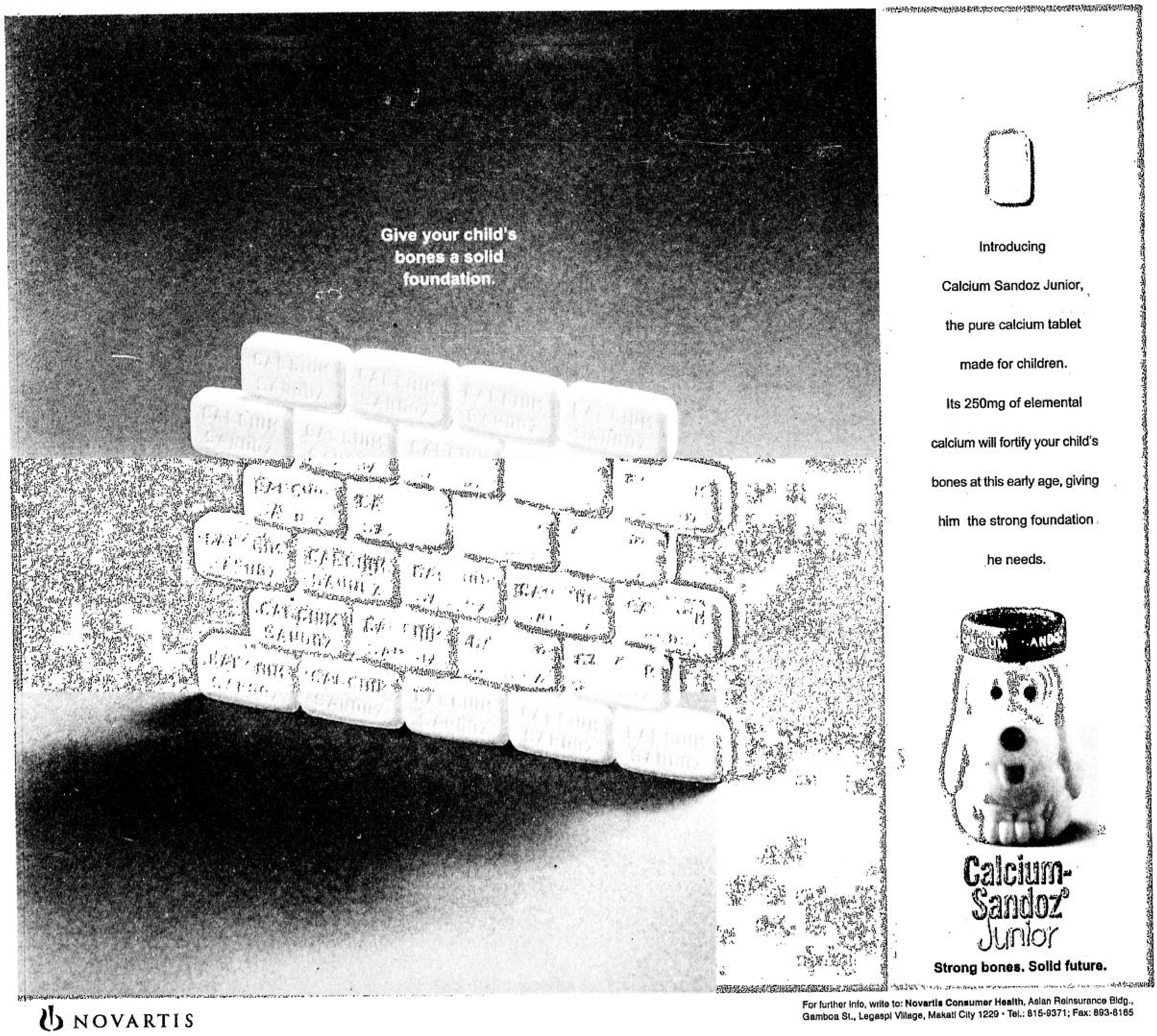
"If they're going to popularize it, I'm all for it, especially since all people from now on will be eating the same kind of *pan de sal*," said Norma Cordoves, who has been running a bakery in Liliw town since 1993. She was among some 200 bakers from Laguna and neighboring provinces who attended the DTI training seminar and workshop on the Pinoy Pandesal at the San Antonio de Padua College here on June 10.

Trade Undersecretary Hernandez allayed fears that the program would drive small bakeries out of business because the bigger ones could now manufacture and flood the market with their standard *pan de sal*.

"If all Filipinos patronize this new *pan de sal*, the demand will actually increase and bakers' income will be guaranteed," he said. Individual bakers, he said, were free to formulate their own marketing strategies, such as further lowering their prices or making their products larger to attract more customers.

The DTI, through the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corp., is offering to help the bakers mechanize and upgrade their production facilities through loans, Hernandez added.

Hermosura said the bakers' federation was planning to set up an institute to train bakers in this town.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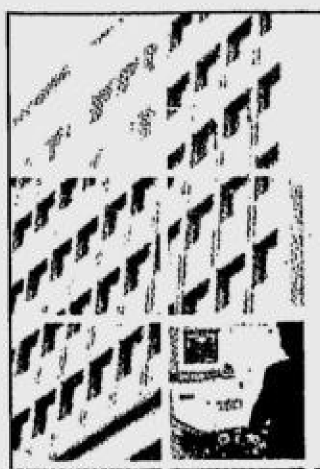

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While Excellence in Health Care Delivery is a continuing commitment, Capitol Medical Center proudly claims to be the Hospital with a Social Conscience. CMC's various endeavors like assisting its Barangay Paligsahan Health Center in cooperation with the Quezon City Health Office; providing teachers and students with basic health education and knowledge in disease prevention and training the residents in community pediatric care with the Gen. Roxas Elementary and High School as the core beneficiaries; and prompt and full payment of its taxes which in turn helped the hospital merit one of The 10 Top Business Tax Payer Citation. All these speak highly of this hospital's social responsiveness.

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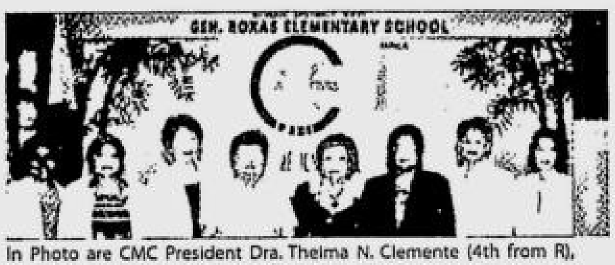
Responsive Citizen

► **A Just Tax Payer!** The Quezon City Local Government and Quezon City Chamber of Commerce and Industry recently awarded Capitol Medical Center for being one of the Top 10 Business Tax Payers of Quezon City for the Year 2002. The organizers cited CMC's prompt and just tax payment to have "contributed significantly to the economic growth of the city, not withstanding the global and national crisis, thereby earning for the City the prestige and recognition as the Local Government Unit with the highest revenue collection in the country for the year 2002."

► **A Neighbor In Deed!** For years now, Capitol Medical Center, through its Department of Pediatrics, has been extending service to its neighbors in Barangay Paligsahan via the latter's Health Center. Babies, well or sick, may come for free check-ups on Monday and Thursday mornings and free immunizations on the last Thursday of every month. Mothers on the other hand are treated to special lectures on breastfeeding and the control of communicable diseases. And all is not work! Super fun Christmas Parties are celebrated annually at the Barangay Paligsahan Health Center for the whole community to attend. CMC's Dr. Lucille Naidas (head - CMC Community Outreach Committee) and her team, Dr. Alma Samantela and Dr. Norma Torregoza, ably organize and manage these events.

► **A Heart for Children!** Capitol Medical Center recently adopted the Gen. Roxas Elementary and High Schools for school year 2003-2004 in cooperation with the Quezon City Health Office. CMC's Department of Pediatrics has planned a series of lectures and activities designed to address the children's specific needs. Immediately after the opening of classes this June, they will be giving physical examinations, PPD Testing and deworming medicines to all Grade One pupils. The long term goal of the project, which CMC hopes to be able to continue, is to provide teachers and students with Basic Health Education and knowledge in Disease Prevention. The series of lectures will cover topics on Hygiene, Tuberculosis (for older children) Drug Abuse, Smoking and Alcoholism, Sexuality, Pregnancy, STD, Suicide, Depression, Detection and Prevention of Communicable Disease.

► **Dedicated Advocate of Blood Banking!** Capitol Medical Center fully subscribes to the principle propounded by the World Health Organization that blood safety and adequacy is a shared responsibility. Thus, the Hospital implements a sustainable program of blood banking. Foremost is its periodic communication campaign among potential donors to have an enlightened and educated appreciation on the merits of blood-letting as well as predispose them to respond positively in critical times of blood shortages. Primary movers in this campaign are the Hospital's own management and medical doctors who take the lead as blood donors thereby serving as models to the rest of the staff of the Hospital. This strong spirit of volunteerism and charismatic encouragement fosters friendship and camaraderie in the entire Hospital community. Consequently, CMC has minimized dependence on other hospitals for its supply of blood.



In Photo are CMC President Dra. Thelma N. Clemente (4th from R), Gen. Roxas Elementary School Principal Ms. Helen Aldea (4th from L) and CMC officers and medical team (L-R) Dr. Loren Baleros, Dr. Norma Torregoza, Dr. Alma Samantela, - MHA, Asst. Director MEDPE Dr. Milagros R. Encarnacion, Dr. Lucille Naidas and Dr. Jane Mendiola.

In photo are (L to R) QCCI President Nathan C. Zulueta, CMC Chief Nurse Lolita C. Gonzales-RN, MEDPE Asst. Director Milagros R. Encarnacion, CMC Chairman/ President Dr. Thelma N. Clemente-MHA, QC Mayor Sonny Belmonte, CMC COO/VP Carmina C. Desales-MHA, FPCHA, CMC Chief Accountant Ernesto Gordovez and QC City Treasurer Dr. Victor Endriga at the awards ceremony held during the 43rd Anniversary Celebration of the QC Chamber of Commerce and Industry last April 11, 2003 at the Sulo Hotel.

CAPITOL MEDICAL CENTER

33rd Anniversary Schedule

June 1- 30 8:00am - 3:00pm	Sagip Mata Project *CMC Foundation Inc.*
June 7, 14, 21, 28 8:00am - 12:00nn	Free Consultation Free Pre-Natal Check-up Free Digital Rectal Exam *Out-Patient Department, CMC II*
June 16-21 3:00pm - 5:00pm	Prostate Cancer Awareness Week Free Digital Rectal Exam/ 20% discount PSA *Out-Patient Department, CMC II*
June 17 8:00am - 5:00pm	Scientific Symposium & Workshop "Hot Topics on Infectious Diseases" *Dept. of Pediatrics, 12th Floor Auditorium*
June 18 8:00am - 4:00pm	Mass Blood Donation *Laboratory Department*
June 19 1:30pm - 3:00pm	Hospital Blood Transfusion Seminar Voluntary Blood Donation Donor Recruitment & Retention *12th Floor Auditorium*
5:00pm	Medical Staff Cocktails *12th Floor Auditorium*
June 20 8:00am	Thanksgiving Mass *12th Floor Auditorium*
10:00am - 3:00pm	Free Blood Typing for Potential Blood Donors *Laboratory Department*
June 21 4:00pm	CMC Employees Program *5th Floor Multipurpose Hall*

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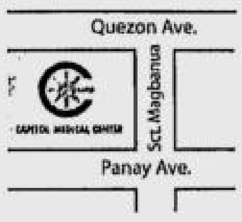

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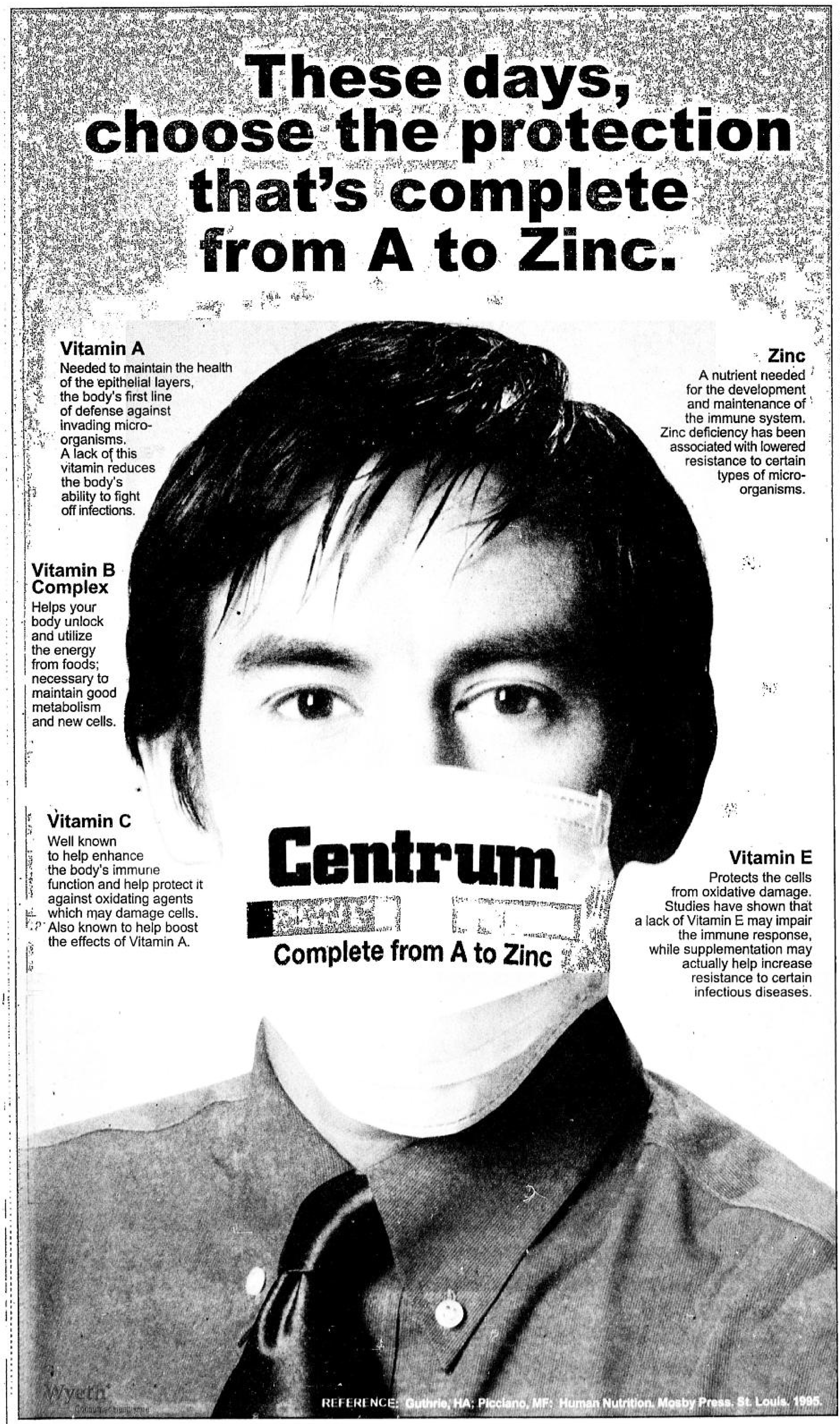

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REFERENCE: Guthrie, HA; Picciano, MF: Human Nutrition, Mosby Press, St. Louis, 1995.

NICOLAI with his parents Malvin and Jane

Saving Nicolai a race vs time

TIME IS running out on 10-month-old Nicolai.

His parents Malvin and Jane must raise about P3 million in two months to save Nicolai from certain death.

Only a liver transplant can save Nicolai, who was born with liver that has no bile duct. Bile has been building up in Nicolai's kidney and is slowly destroying the organ.

In most cases, biliary atresia babies like Nicolai has a year after birth before the liver fails, although there have been several cases where the victims have lived for several years. Nicolai's plight was featured in "Jessica Soho Reports" last May 21 together with "The Miracle Baby" Jeremiah Matubis, and in Ernie Baron's "Knowledge Power" last June 7.

His parents' savings have been depleted by the expensive medicine and constant hospitalization of their Nicolai.

Donations may be sent to: ITF Nicolai Magtibay (account name) at the following banks: Bank of Commerce, Account No. 0035-49496-0

Bank of the Philippine Island, Account No. 3353-0496-22

Metrobank, Account No. 3-609-0155-1

Nicolai's parents Malvin and Jane can also be contacted at (632) 5460387 or cell phone 0917-4975851. Or through Lift-Babies Foundation Inc. which is helping raise funds for Nicolai at (632) 814-4621 and cell phone 0918-963237.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

POLITICAL LAW (CONSTITUTIONAL LAW)/REMEDIAL LAW (CRIMINAL PROCEDURE)—When warrantless arrest is lawful—It is clear that at the time accused was apprehended, she was committing a criminal offense. She was making a delivery or transporting prohibited drugs in violation of Article II, Section 4 of R. A. No. 6425. Under the Rules of Court, one of the instances a police officer is permitted to carry out a warrantless arrest is when the person to be arrested is caught committing a crime in flagrante delicto, thus: "Section 5. Arrest without Warrant; when lawful—A peace officer or a private person may, without warrant, arrest a person: (a) When in his presence, the person to be arrested has committed, is actually committing, or is attempting to commit an offense; (b) When an offense has in fact just been committed, and he has probable cause to believe based on personal knowledge of facts or circumstances that the person to be arrested has committed it; and (c) When the person to be arrested is a prisoner who has escaped from a penal establishment or place where he is serving final judgment or temporarily confined while his case is pending, or has escaped while being transferred from one confinement to another. x x x." [Citations omitted.] [Justice Puno, Third Division, People v. Libnao, G.R. No. 136860. Jan. 20]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, June 16, 2003
11th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: **2 Cor 6:1-10**
Gospel: **Mt 5:38-42**

Jesus said to his disciples, "You have heard that it was said: An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I tell you this: do not oppose evil with evil; if someone slaps you on your right cheek, turn and offer the other. If someone sues you in court for your shirt, give your coat as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give when asked and do not turn your back on anyone who wants to borrow from you."

Commentary

Current justice systems the world over still work on basically the same Old Testament principle: the punishment must not exceed the injury done. That is, if the systems work at all, or if they work the same way for everyone. Just wages and fair working conditions are still fought for on the streets worldwide. Debt cancellation remains on the desk of international organizations as debtor countries bleed to death. Jesus' call for an end to retaliatory justice and his teaching on liberality are more urgent than ever. The global condition will only deteriorate if we do not consider them more seriously. People ask, "Christianity has been around for two millennia and it hasn't made a difference in the world?" Christianity . . . but Christians?

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METROBRIEFS

Jailed on Father's Day

TWO MEN spent Father's Day in jail yesterday after police caught them during a raid of a gambling house in Caloocan City. But the two, Raymundo Diaz, 42, and Aner Bernal, 35, both of Libis, Baesa, denied they were gambling and claimed police arrested them by mistake. Diaz, a mason, said he was just passing the time and that he only knew Bernal by face in his "few visits" to the gambling house. Bernal, a plumber, claimed that he was on his way to work when he heard a scuffle inside the gambling house. He said he followed some of the people running away but was nabbed by the police. But police said illegal gambling charges would be filed against the suspects. *Tarra Quismundo*

Killed in Port Area

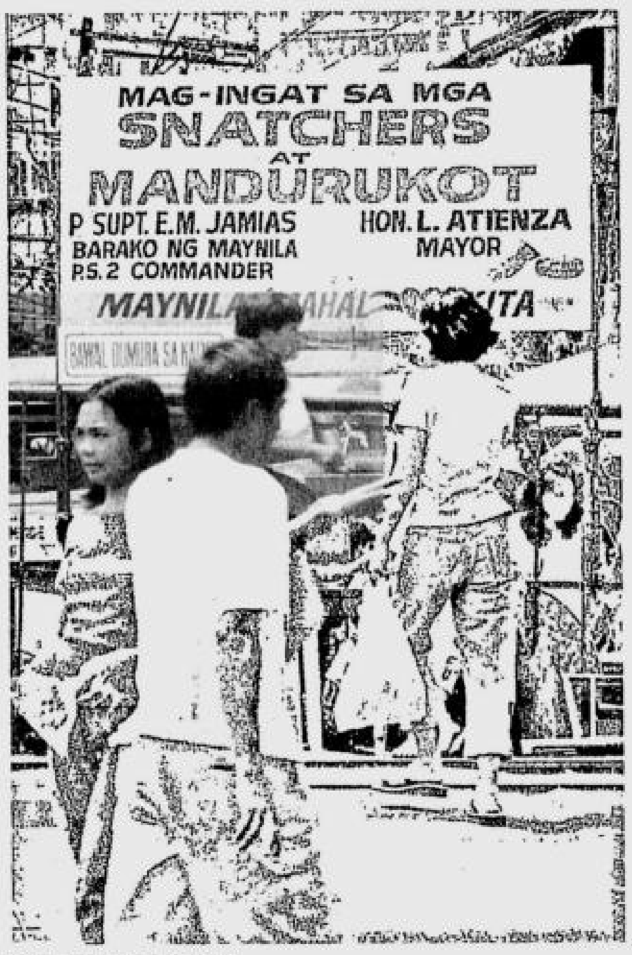
ESTANISLAO Villacuatro, 26, went to his cousin Santiago Fatok's house yesterday morning to bring him the good news that his employer had wanted to hire his cousin. But Villacuatro himself became the bad news. He was stabbed to death by thugs outside Falok's house in Port Area, Manila. Police said Villacuatro, his cousin Fatok, and Felix Canuy, were waiting for a boat ride to go to Pasig where Villacuatro's employer lived. The three caught the ire of 11 thugs led by a certain Ramon Picardal. Police said the suspects beat up Fatok first, but he was able to run away together with Canuy. The suspects then turned their ire on Villacuatro whom they stabbed to death. The suspects escaped after the killing, police said. *Margaux Ortiz*

Free legal advice in QC

A FREE legal assistance office was opened to the public starting last week to meet the increasing demand for cheap, if not free, legal consultations. This program was initiated by Antonio Enrile-Inton, councilor of District IV, Quezon City. Inton said the program could also increase the knowledge of the people regarding their rights which, in turn, could prevent certain human rights abuses from happening. Anyone who needs legal advice can go to the district office and directly ask for the help of either Inton himself or his team of a trial lawyer and a paralegal staff. Inton said consultations would be held in 20 Malakas St., Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City. The office will be open from Mondays to Fridays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. *Amy Remo*

Nabbed in Caloocan

THE TESTIMONY of a lone witness led to the arrest of a 17-year-old pedicab driver, Mario Mariño, 25, also a pedicab driver; and Roy Lo-oc, 28, a janitor. Police said the three were suspects in the killing of carpenter Jaime Bartina, 43, last June 10. The suspects were arrested on Saturday while on a drinking spree with two other companions in a videoke bar on A. Bonifacio Drive in Caloocan City. A witness positively identified the suspects as the ones who had killed Bartina. Police have charged the suspects with murder. Their two companions, James Permejo, 21, and Marlon Mariño, 22, interfered with the arrest, and were arrested themselves, police said. Both were found with knives on them and were charged with violation of City Ordinance 5121, which prohibits the carrying of deadly weapons. *Amy Remo*



WARNING SIGN
Big signs warning pedestrians against falling victims to snatchers and pickpockets have become common sight in Manila's shopping areas like this one put up on Recto Avenue and Ilaya Street in Divisoria. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Clean up own yard first, Fernando urged

By Nelson Forte Flores

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando and his wife Marikina City Mayor Maria Lourdes Fernando apparently have to do some backyard cleaning of their own.

This came to view after residents in the northwestern part of the city asked the Marikina Regional Trial Court to stop the operation of an alleged illegal garbage dump in Doña Petra Subdivision.

Eduardo Parra, a local environmentalist, said they wanted the court to compel Mayor Fernando to comply with a National Solid Waste Commission (NSWC) order shutting down the dump site.

Parra, who also is the president of the Twin Ville Subdivision Homeowners Association, told the INQUIRER that the 21-page petition for injunction and mandamus was directed against Mayor Fernando and Gloria Buenaventura, the city's Waste Management Office chief.

The petition alleges that the mayor and Buenaventura have repeatedly refused to comply with the NSWC order. Consequently, it seeks to direct the respondents to clear the area of garbage.

Parra said the dump site was opened by former mayor, now MMDA chair, Bayani Fernando in 1994. Almost immediately, he noted, residents of Twin Ville, Fairlane Subdivision, the Loyola Grand Villas, Ayala Heights, Majestic Subdivision, Iwahig, Nangka, Balubad, Tumana and Barangay Concepcion Uno began to feel the adverse effects of the dump site.

A year after the dump site began operations, Parra related, the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources and the Laguna Lake Development Authority issued a cease and desist order to the city government while describing the dump site as "a menace to public health and safety."

Albert Magalang, NSWC executive director, said the commission issued a closure order for the dump site in 1995 but this has not been properly enforced.

He pointed out that the dump site was only about 200 meters from the Marikina River and was therefore not suitable for garbage disposal.

Magalang noted that the dump had been operating on and off since 2000.

He said the city would temporarily stop the dump's operation whenever residents filed a complaint before the LLDA-DENR but would resume garbage disposal activities after some time.

In an earlier interview, Mayor Fernando insisted that there was no illegal dump site in Marikina.

They have to make do with packed rooms

By Tarra Quismundo

WHEN students in Malabon come to school today, they will have to make do with jam-packed classrooms and scarce facilities, as they have in the past years.

The promise of new buildings and more space in their classrooms is yet to come true, as construction of such facilities has been delayed.

Malabon Mayor Amado Vicencio blamed his previous suspensions for the project's delay. Vicencio had been suspended twice since he assumed his post in 2001.

But Vice Mayor Mark Allan Jay Yambao said that even if Vicencio had not been suspended, the project would still be delayed.

"The people whom he hired (Vicencio) to work on the project were slow," Yambao told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

But Vicencio renewed his promise, and said that the construction of five school buildings and 46 new classrooms will be finished by the end of the year.

"We are working double time to finish the project," Vicencio said.

Cops keep close watch...

From page A24

Edgar Aglipay.

The anti-drug operations around schools come on the heels of the announcement of random drug testing to be conducted on high school and college students on June 20.

The Dangerous Drugs Board has been tasked with drafting the implementing rules and regulations for the testing in schools and workplaces.

"The issues on what constitutes random drug testing, who will pay for the testing and who will conduct the testing have to be threshed out," Avenido said.

Preparation for today's school opening began last month when all PNP units were instructed to coordinate with the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education.

Classes technically opened last Monday to allow health officials to conduct SARS-prevention seminars for students and parents.

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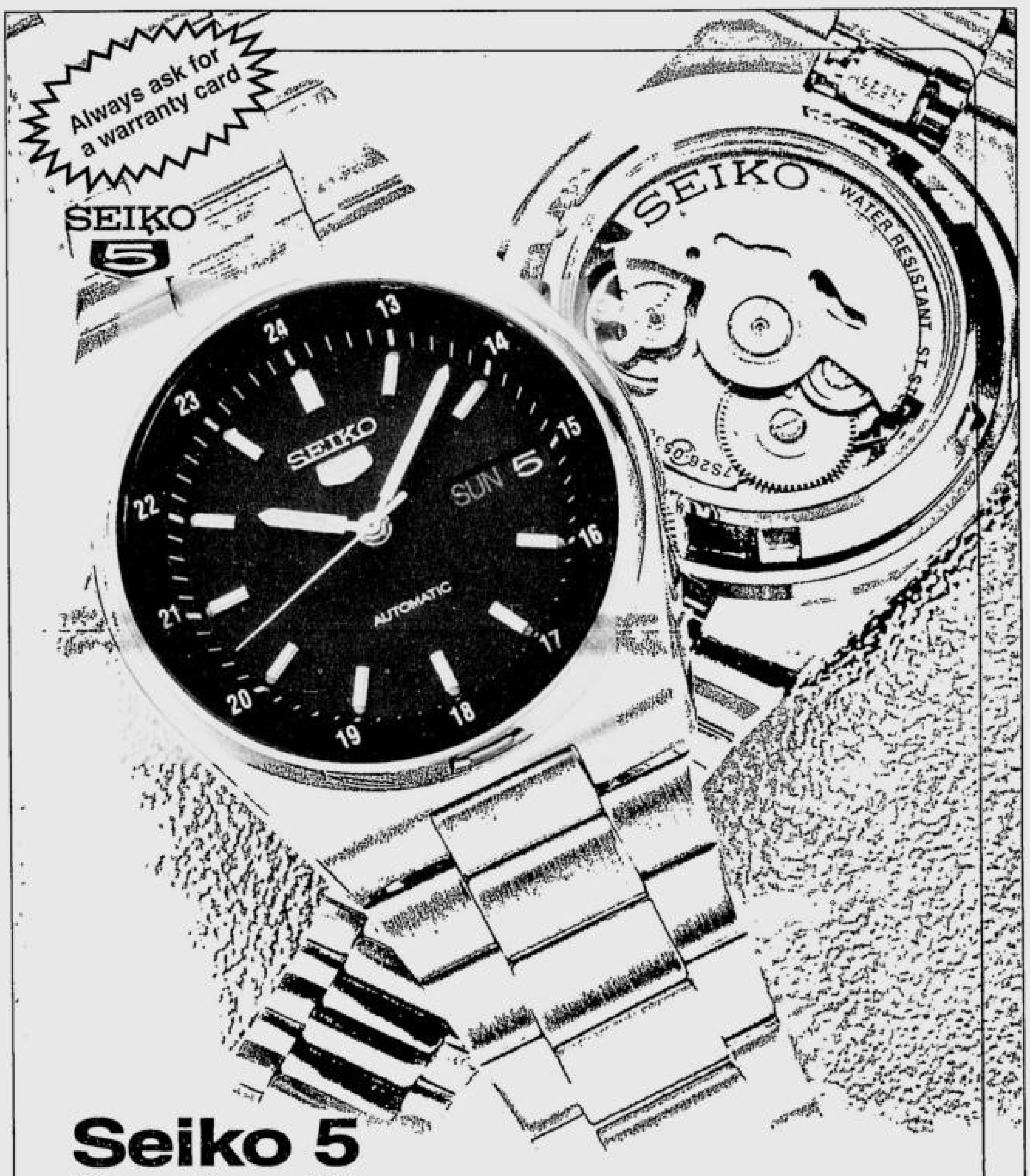

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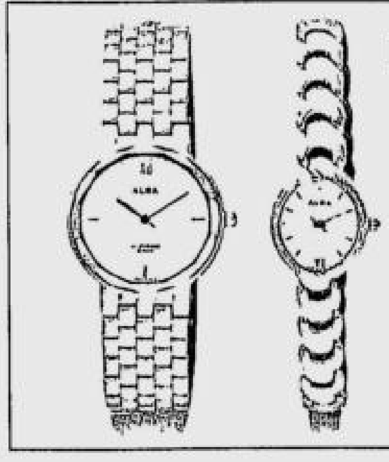

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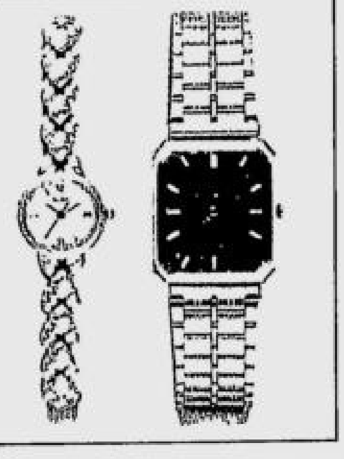

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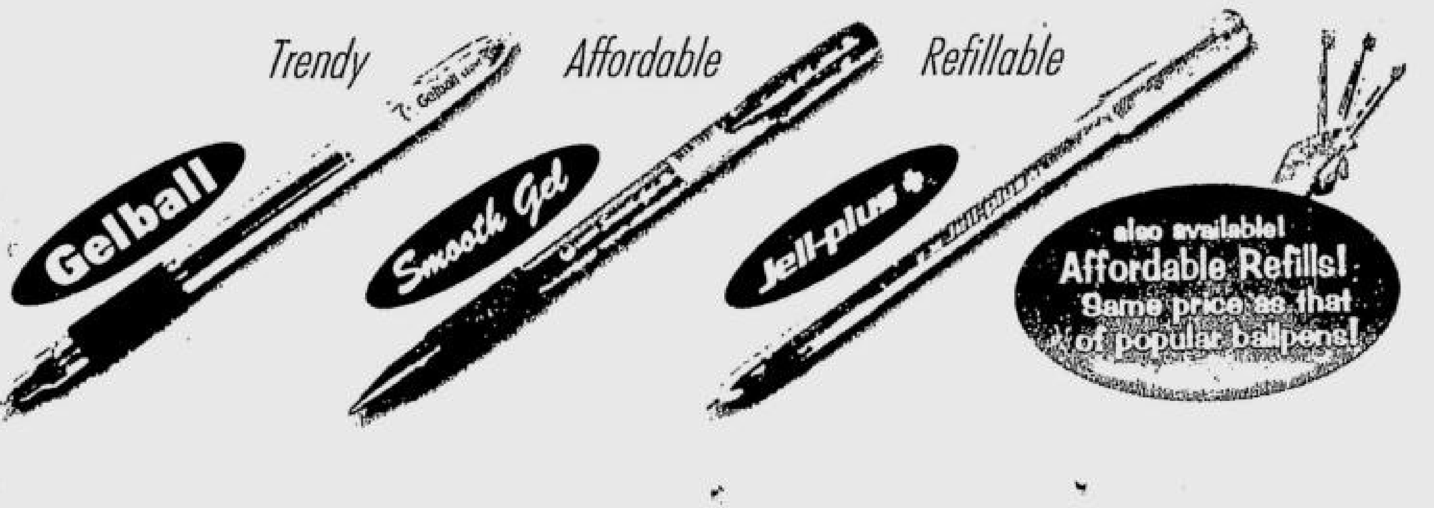

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Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

Cops keep close watch over schools, students

POLICE conduct foot patrols in this file photo taken during last year's school opening.

By Christian V. Esguerra and TJ Burgonio

THE COUNTRY'S 114,000-strong police force has been placed on full alert for the opening of classes in all private and public schools today.

Lawmen will be on the lookout for pickpockets, mobile phone snatchers, drug pushers, and other street criminals victimizing students, according to the order by Chief Supt. Enrique Galang, Philippine National Police director for operations.

Officers in the 17 police regions were also told to be on guard against street gangs that are expected to conduct recruitment activities among students to beef up their ranks.

In Metro Manila, the National Capital Region Police Office will deploy its entire augmentation force of about 14,000 to increase police visibility outside schools and other key areas.

The NCRPO has instructed its men to intensify patrols and enhance traffic management in the metropolis to ensure the safety of motorists, particularly students and tourists.

Joining the regular police force would be Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) agents and their informers who would monitor schools, colleges and universities all over the country.

PDEA Executive Director Anselmo Avenido Jr. has ordered all his regional directors to prevent drug pushers and persons under the influence of illegal drugs from victimizing students.

Avenido said they were putting emphasis on patrols around educational institutions to ensure the students' safety.

"We want parents to be less worried about the safety of their children from drug traffickers," Avenido said.

Avenido said PDEA anti-drug operations would be in coordination with those of the PNP Anti-Narcotics Task Force headed by Police Deputy Director General

COPS/ A23

Pasig-Cubao LRT runs increased

By Norman Bordadora

LINE 2 of the Light Rail Transit begins its full and regular operation today between Pasig City and Quezon City with its stations opening for commuters at 5 a.m. and closing at 9 p.m.

The Light Rail Transit Administration announced that LRT-2, popularly known as the Megatren, would deploy four full-sized trains during peak hours.

The LRTA made the announcement in time for the opening of regular classes. It also said it was deploying additional trains on LRT-1 or its Monumento-Baclaran line.

"The Santolan-Cubao line will now be open to provide a hassle-free and comfortable ride to the public. Trains would be running the tracks at five-minute intervals," said LRTA administrator Teddy Cruz Jr.

Travel time on the 4.3 kilometer stretch from Pasig to Cubao will only be 15 minutes.

The travel of students who would ply the Taft Avenue and Rizal Avenue routes of LRT-1 would also be eased somewhat with new trains coming into operation.

"We are fielding more trains -- three trains with nine light rail vehicles, which have been installed with airconditioners," Cruz said.

He added that security would also be enhanced due to the increased volume of passengers as a result of the opening of classes.

Without the LRT Line 2, it usually takes about 45 minutes to an hour to reach Cubao from Santolan because of slow-moving traffic during rush hour.

Phase 1 of the LRT Line 2 will have four stations: Santolan, Katipunan, Anonas and Cubao.

The rest of LRT Line 2 running from Cubao to Recto in Manila will become operational by next year. It will serve as the link to the existing Baclaran-to-Monumento Line 1 and to the Taft Avenue-to-Quezon Avenue Edsa Metro Rail Transit 3.

A flat rate of P12 will be charged to passengers. Stored-value tickets will cost P120 each for regular passengers, and P96 for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

LATE SPORTS

SMB win allows Alaska to advance

GAMES WEDNESDAY (*Philsports*)
5 p.m.—Alaska vs Talk N Text
7:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs SLR

SAN MIGUEL Beer came out almost flawless in its farewell game in the PBA All Filipino Cup, hacking out a 96-87 victory over the FedEx Express at the Araneta Coliseum last night that gave Alaska a hitch-free ride to the semifinals.

Nic Belasco typified the Beermen's untainted performance, hitting six three-point shots and topscoring with 29 points and hauling down 10 rebounds. San Miguel Beer's win prevented the Express from figuring in a playoff against the Aces.

Alaska thus advanced into the next phase as the top qualifier in Group A. It will tackle Talk N Text, the second best squad in Group B, in a best-of-five semifinals that will start on Wednesday.

Sta. Lucia Realty, which lost to the Aces, 75-66, earlier in the day, meets defending champion Coca-Cola in the other semifinal pairing.

Playing the spoiler's role for the Express, the Beermen avoided what could have been a sudden-death encounter between the Bert Lina-owned squad and the Aces.

The Express somehow put a semblance of a fight when Wynne Arboleda, Gherome Ejercito and Omanzie Rodriguez pooled their resources together and cut the lead down to 77-91, with still four minutes remaining.

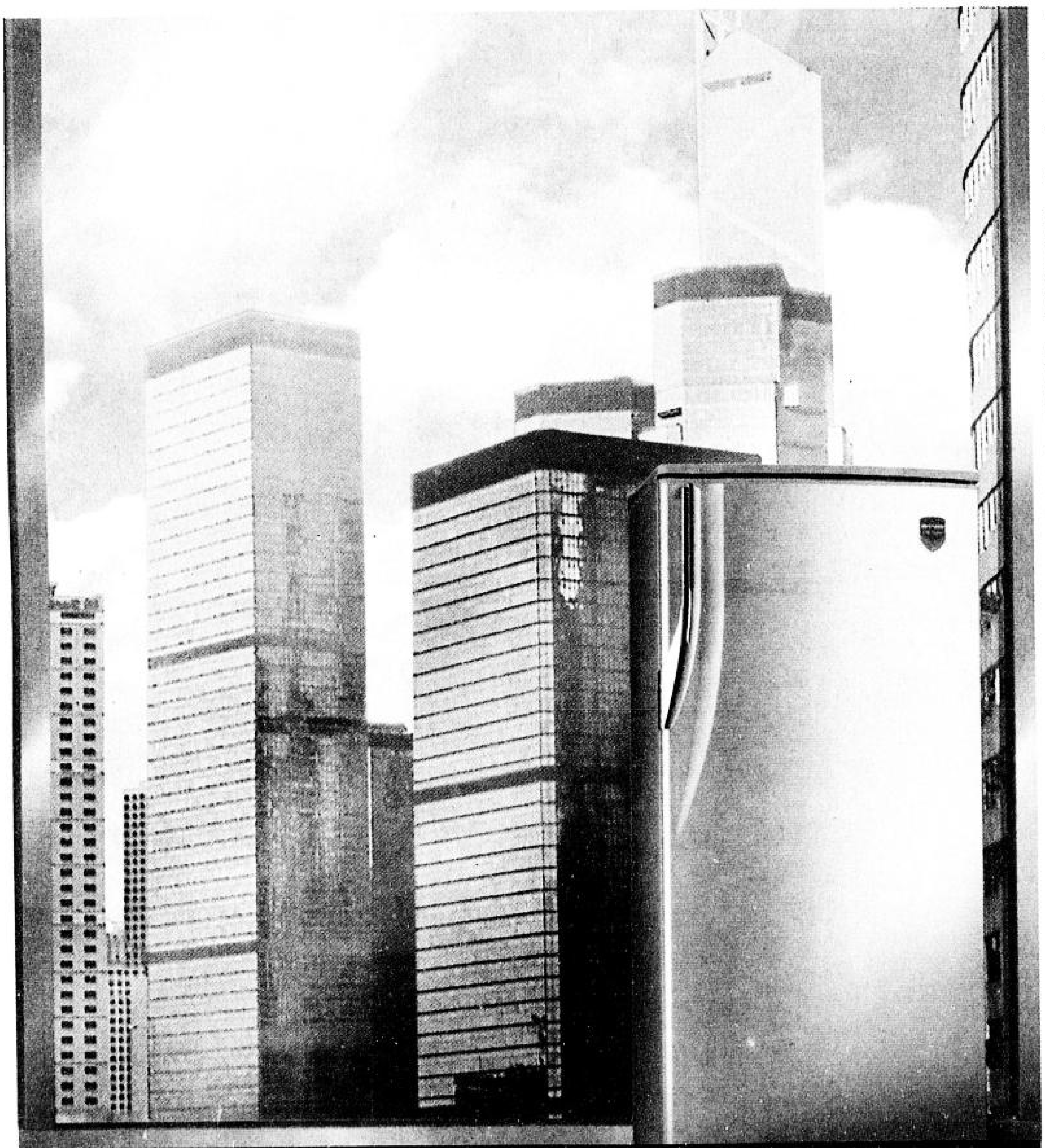
But Dondon Hontiveros, Olsen Racela and Belasco doused the rally as both teams ended their all-Filipino campaign with identical 1-2 records.

Scores:

SAN MIGUEL 96—Belasco 29, Victoria 18, Hontiveros 12, Racela 10, Gahol, 9, Ildefonso 6, Mente 6, Legaspi 2, Gamboa 2, Paras 2, Calo 0.

FEDEX 87—Ejercito 17, Billones 10, Meneses 9, Tirualo 9, De Ocampo 9, Codiñera 8, Arboleda 8, Ortiguera 7, Ferriols 6, Rodriguez 2, Yap 2.

Quarters: 26-15; 51-33; 81-53; 96-87



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Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

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ROSALES 1 DOWN AFTER BRILLIANT 64

Jenny knocks at title door

By Jong Arcano

IN HER young LPGA career, all that Jenny Rosales wishes for is either to win her first title or get paired with Swede icon Annika Sorenstam.

Rosales will finally realize one of those dream dates when she tees off today in the company of Sorenstam in the final round of the Giant Eagle LPGA Classic in Vienna, Ohio. And with some luck, she may even end up getting both.

The 22-year-old Rosales came knocking at the championship door yesterday, firing a bogey-free 8-under-par 64 at the rain-drenched Squaw Creek Country Club that sent her skyrocketing to second place just a stroke off the lead.

Bunched in 40th spot after an opening 72, Rosales caught fire, gunning down six of her eight birdies in a spectacular run on the front nine where she finished.

Jennifer capped her lowest round since she turned pro three years ago with a perfect 9-iron on No. 9 that spun back and stopped an inch short of what could have been a hole-in-one.

Rosales' big charge put her in a tie with Sorenstam (65) and Joanne Mills (66) at 136, a stroke behind Americans Rachel Teske, who fired a 65, and Jean Bartholomew, who shared scoring honors with Rosales.

Jenny hopes for the best when she challenges the red-hot Annika who will be gunning for her third straight victory on the LPGA after becoming the first woman in 58 years to play on the PGA Tour.

They are set to tee off at 12:52 p.m. Sunday (12:52 a.m. Monday Manila time).

"I just want to play well, keep myself in contention and see what happens," said Rosales, who will be eyeing to surpass her best finish ever in the LPGA tour of third place in The Office Depot tilt in 2001.

The last time Rosales put herself in contention was in last year's British Open where she took the third round lead with a 7-under-65 before eventually finishing tied for fourth.

The Giant Eagle Classic is the same event Fil-Am Dorothy Joy Delasin had won two years in a row in 2000-2001.

This time, Delasin shot a 70 and was far behind at 143.

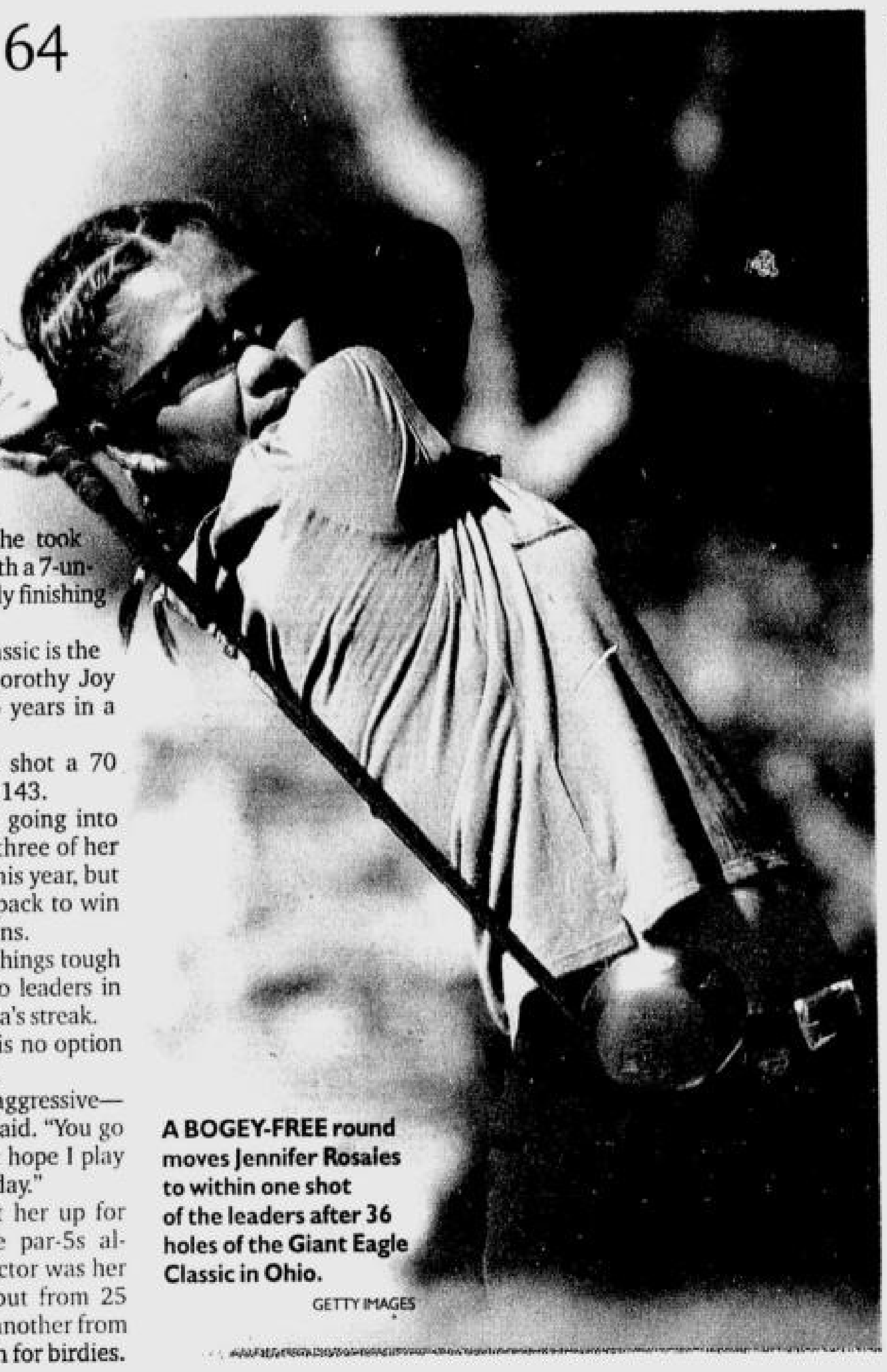
Sorenstam has led going into the final round in all three of her LPGA Tour victories this year, but has come out of the pack to win 14 of her 45 career wins.

That should make things tough for Jenny and the two leaders in their bid to stop Annika's streak.

For Rosales, there is no option left but be aggressive.

"You have to be aggressive—just attack," Rosales said. "You go right at the pin. I just hope I play the same way I did today."

Her bold plays set her up for birdies on the three par-5s although the crucial factor was her putting. She holed out from 25 feet on the 18th and another from 30 feet on the seventh for birdies.



A BOGEY-FREE round moves Jennifer Rosales to within one shot of the leaders after 36 holes of the Giant Eagle Classic in Ohio.

GETTY IMAGES

Jenny's fine numbers

64 - Giant Eagle Classic 6/14/03
65 - Women's British Open 8/10/02
65 - State Farm Rail Classic 9/01/02
66 - Jamie Farr Kroger 7/13/02
67 - Welch's Circle K 3/22/02
67 - Chick-Fil-A Charity 5/03/02
67 - ShopRite Classic 6/29/02
67 - Welch's Circle K 3/22/02

Jenny's 2nd round scorecard:

Hole 12, 163-yard par 3: birdie - chipped in for birdie

Hole 18, 412-yard par 4: birdie - 6-iron to 25 feet

Hole 1, 385-yard par 4: birdie - 9-iron to eight feet

Hole 2, 526-yard par 5: birdie - 8-iron to eight feet

Hole 5, 479-yard par 5: birdie - 60-degree wedge to five feet

Hole 7, 341-yard par 4: birdie - 50-degree wedge to 30 feet

Hole 8, 486-yard par 5: birdie - 60-degree wedge to four feet

Hole 9, 134-yard par 3: birdie - 9-iron to one inch

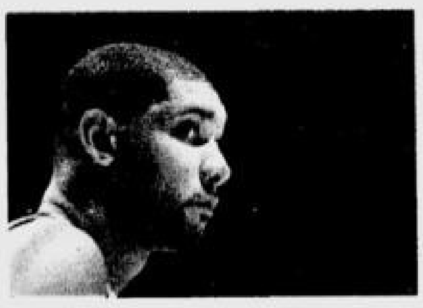
The scores:

Jean Bartholomew	71-64-135 -9
Rachel Teske	70-65-135 -9
Jennifer Rosales	72-64-136 -8
Annika Sorenstam	71-65-136 -8
Joanne Mills	70-66-136 -8
Se Ri Pak	72-66-138 -6
Pat Hurst	69-69-138 -6
Kristal Parker-Manzo	69-70-139 -5
Helen Alfredsson	72-68-140 -4
Hilary Lunke	71-69-140 -4
Dottie Pepper	70-70-140 -4
Catrin Nilsmark	69-71-140 -4
Marisa Baena	69-71-140 -4
Catriona Matthew	71-70-141 -3
Jeong Jang	71-70-141 -3
Jenny Lidback	71-70-141 -3
Beth Bauer	71-70-141 -3
Lorie Kane	70-71-141 -3

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **Aces prevail, but Realtors gain** /A26

■ **Hot Furyk ahead by 3** /A27



■ **Duncan & Co. eye clincher** /A30

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Finals—Nets vs Spurs, Game 6; 8:30 a.m. (r - 7 p.m.); IBC 13; 11:30 a.m. (r - 9 p.m.); Solar Sports—San Antonio attempts to close out the series at home, but New Jersey is determined to force a decisive Game 7.

GOLF: Best of PGA Golf; 11:30 a.m.; ESPN—Get up close and personal with the best international players in the PGA Tour.

2003 US Open, Final Round; 12 nn and 10 p.m. (r); ESPN; 8 p.m. (r); RPN 9—Catch a replay of the final 18 holes from Olympia Fields, Illinois.

BILLIARDS: San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour; 1 p.m. (r); Star Sports—Watch how Pinoy billiards masters Efren "Bata" Reyes and Warren Kiamco engage in a classic duel in the Manila leg.

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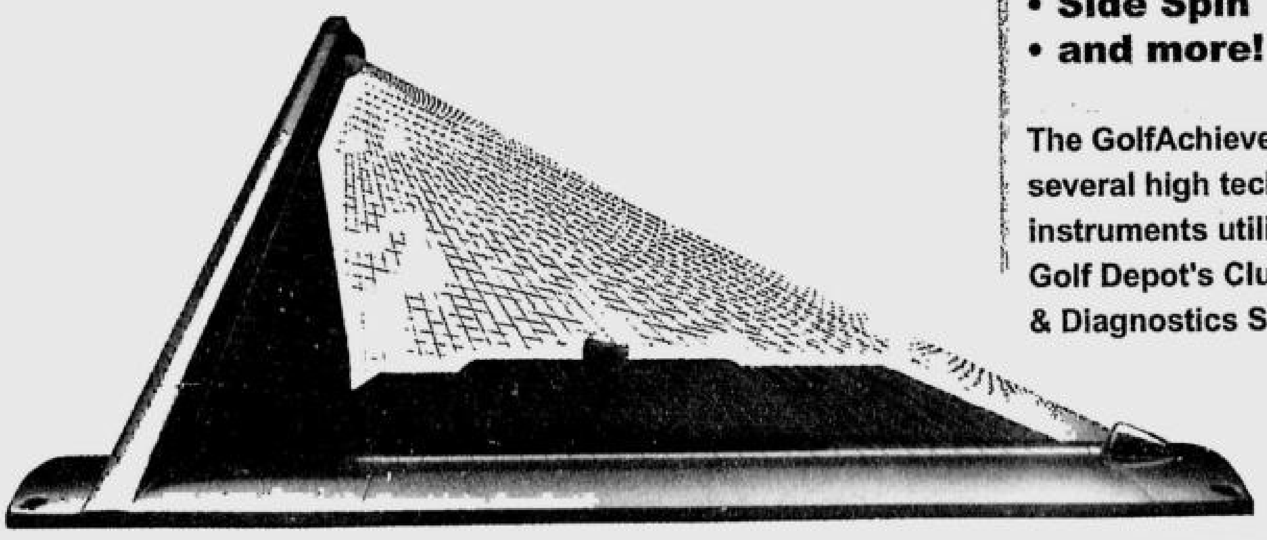

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Alaska prevails, but Sta. Lucia advances

By June Navarro

THIS WAS a game where the loser came out the big winner.

Alaska prevailed 75-66 but failed to stop Sta. Lucia Realty from clinching the first semifinal slot in the Samsung-PBA All Filipino Cup yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Aces went into the match needing to win by 18 points to make it outright into the semis via the quotient system and the goal was within sight as they led by 20 points at one stage.

But the Realtors, with their injured top gun Kenneth Duremdes watching from the sidelines, fought back and whittled down the lead to what it was in the end.

Alaska coach Tim Cone blamed everything on the referees.

"I'm really disappointed with the referees. We're up by 17 and even 20 but the calls simply went the other way. It's now beyond our control and that's the sad part about it," said Cone.

Both Sta. Lucia and Alaska finished their quarterfinal schedules with 2-1 win-loss records, but the Realtors wound up with a plus 10 quotient and the Aces plus 7.

Alaska's win shut the qualifying door on San Miguel Beer, which was playing Federal Express at presstime.

(Related story on Metro's Late Sports)

The Express, with a quotient of minus 3, need to beat the Beermen by 14 points to reach the semis ahead of Sta. Lucia. Otherwise, they go into a playoff with the Aces for the second semis berth.

A win by SMB, however, automatically gives the second semifinal slot to Alaska.

Scores:

ALASKA 75—Cortez 16, Arigo 16, Peek 10, Allado 9, Felhi 8, Cablay 6, Duat 6, Camaso 4, Noble 0

STA. LUCIA 66—Aquino 22, Espino 19, Mendoza 13, Yu 4, Adriano 4, Francisco 4, Webb 0, Victoiero 0, Ong 0, Tan 0.

Quarterscores: 21-16, 41-26, 58-41, 75-66.

DUREMDES will undergo magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) on his injured calf muscle today. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

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Complaint and commentary

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

THIS protesting letter writer swears that he saw it all from ringside. OK, he calls the National Open Amateur Boxing championship in Puerto Princesa City from May 25 to 31 a big success and takes time out to congratulate the hosts led by Gov. Joel T. Reyes.

But he says he could not get over the fact that one woman boxer, Josie Gabuco of Palawan, who got badly beaten and, in fact, was given two standing 8-counts in the first round, won the gold medal in her division and was also voted most outstanding boxer.

"In their desire to please Gov. Reyes and the Palaweños, officials came up with a shameful decision," the letter writer protests. "And to think that Gabuco, after the two 8-counts, was allowed to proceed with the bout only after Rene Fortaleza, sec-gen of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines who also acted as tournament director, approached the members of the jury and the referee."

The complainant adds that it was obvious Gov. Reyes and Abap President Manny Lopez were both unhappy with the decision.

The complainant, an officer of one of the contingents from Metro Manila, requests that his name not be published.

Granted. But, with the seriousness of the accusation, we could only turn to veteran sportswriter Dennis Eroa, who covered the event for the INQUIRER. Mr. Eroa has filed this reply:

"Referee Nelson Factoranan, who hails from the Visayas, admitted he did err in stopping the bout in the first round. It was very clear that, despite the two standing 8-counts, Gabuco was still fit to fight. No, it was not true that fans inside the Puerto Princesa Coliseum resented the decision. Fact was Gabuco got hailed as a sporting hero by old and young fans, including Gov. Reyes. Regarding Manny Lopez, all the Abap chief could do was cheer both fighters (Noemi Pe-Keng of Baguio City and Gabuco) for a memorable bout.

"It's quite surprising that someone who claims to be at ringside would take the cudgels for the team most affected by the result of that great bout–Baguio City. For the record, Baguio City has not filed a protest regarding the loss of its boxer, and this should be taken as a tribute to Gabuco's feat.

"By the way, the five-man jury, and not Abap sec-gen Rene Fortaleza, overruled Factoranan's decision to stop the fight after the two standing 8-counts in the first round. Hope this clarifies everything."

***

THEY failed to engineer a record Western Conference finals comeback against the San Antonio Spurs, but the Dallas Mavericks won something closer to the crown itself–respect.

This according to Teddy Reynoso of Bulacan, Bulacan who commented that "watching the Mavs come back from an enormous 19-point deficit and win by a dozen points against a taller, heftier and more athletic Tim Duncan-powered Spurs in the 5th game of their best-of-7 conference finals raised collective goose pimples."

Adds Mr. Reynoso: "What they lost in the forced sidelining of the injured Dirk Nowitzki, the Mavs more than made up with pure, unadulterated display of grit, courage and talent. And what made it distinctly special was that the unforgettable win was achieved largely through excellent teamwork on both ends of the court."

Mr. Reynoso says he can't recall the Chicago Bulls during their Jordan-Pippen championship run doing the same in a crucial postseason game without the dynamic duo.

"This goes to show," our letter writer concludes, "that even in basketball, the whole is still greater than the sum of all its parts; a team can still win even without the presence of stars if the players will work together and help one another."

Well said.

LEADER'S 200 RIPS 54-HOLE RECORD

Hot Furyk ahead by 3

OLYMPIA FIELDS, Illinois — Jim Furyk sank a curling 25-foot birdie putt at the last to forge three strokes clear in the US Open third round on Saturday as Tiger Woods' title defense was left in tatters.

The 33-year-old Furyk, co-leader overnight with Vijay Singh, carded a three-under-par 67 after mixing five birdies with two bogeys at a sun-drenched Olympia Fields.

Not since Woods has anyone been under par by double digits at a US Open. Not since Woods has anyone looked as much in control as Furyk.

While Woods, Singh and everyone else around him fell apart, Furyk shattered the 54-hole scoring record at the Open with a 10-under-200.

More importantly, Furyk will take a three-stroke lead over Australian Stephen Leaney into the final round, thanks to the last-hole birdie that capped off a remarkable day.

Furyk's 200 broke the previous 54-hole record of 203 last matched by Lee Janzen in 1993 at Baltusrol.

Singh, tied with Furyk most of the sunny, warm day south of Chicago, missed a 3-foot par putt on the 16th hole that sent him to a stunning collapse. He bogeyed the next two holes for a 72 and was five strokes behind.

"I got to this position with a certain type of strategy," Furyk said. "And I've got to continue to do that tomorrow."

The strategy is fairly simple–fairways and greens, the strength of his game.

On an Olympia Fields course that ranks as one of the easiest in US Open history, Furyk has done things few other players have known.

Gil Morgan was the first player to reach at least 10 under in a US Open, at Pebble Beach in 1992. He faltered on the weekend and tied for 13th.

Woods was the last, winning at Pebble Beach three years ago at 12 under par.

Furyk will be paired Sunday with Leaney, who has never been in contention in a major and is playing only his second US Open. He recovered from a double bogey on No.10 to shoot 68 and was at 203.

Nick Price had the lead at one point with five birdies in his first six holes, but gave all but one of those shots back and wound up with a 69, five strokes behind.

Barring the greatest comeback ever in a Grand Slam event, Woods won't hold a major title since before he won the '99 PGA Championship at nearby Medinah. *AP, Reuters*

JIM Furyk reacts to a 25-foot birdie on the 18th green.

GETTY IMAGES

2ND ROUND SCORES

200 Jim Furyk 67 66 67 **203** Stephen Leaney (Australia) 67 68 68 **205** Nick Price (Zimbabwe) 71 65 69, Vijay Singh (Fiji) 70 63 72 **206** Dicky Pride 71 69 66, Ian Leggatt (Canada) 68 70 68, Eduardo Romero (Argentina) 70 66 70, Jonathan Byrd 69 66 71 **207** Mark O'Meara 72 68 67, Mark Calcavecchia 68 72 67, Billy Mayfair 69 71 67 **208** Mike Weir (Canada) 73 67 68, Ernie Els (South Africa) 69 70 69, Justin Leonard 66 70 72 **209** Chad Campbell 70 70 69, David Toms 72 67 70, Tim Petrovic 69 70 70, Tom Byrum 69 69 71, Fredrik Jacobson (Sweden) 69 67 73 **210** Jay Williamson 72 69 69, Brett Quigley 65 74 71, Stewart Cink 70 68 72., Robert Damron 69 68 73.

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SINGH doesn't expect Furyk to falter.

Back-nine disaster pulls Singh down

OLYMPIA FIELDS, Illinois—Vijay Singh knows he cannot wait for US Open leader Jim Furyk to slip up during the final round on Sunday if the Fijian has any chance of landing another major victory.

Singh began Saturday's third round tied for the lead on seven under par with Furyk, but finished five shots behind the American's 10-under mark after carding a two-over par round of 72.

"Jim is playing very well, I don't think he's going to shoot worse than he did today," two-time major winner Singh told reporters.

"I have to go out there and catch up. I don't expect Jim to slip up too much."

Singh, 40, moved to nine under for the tournament on the sixth hole of the day at Olympia Fields, but the back nine caused him no end of problems with four bogeys–three of them in the last three holes.

"I'm a little bit disappointed with the way I finished," he said. *Reuters*

Dream start, then horror for Price

OLYMPIA FIELDS, Illinois—Nick Price got off to one of those starts golfers dream of, the kind they spin tales about 25 years down the road.

He birdied five of his first six holes, charging to the top of the US Open leaderboard at 9-under.

But just as quickly as the magic came Saturday, it disappeared. He bogeyed four of the next six holes, and couldn't put the ball in the fairway.

"He hit it absolutely pure the first five, six holes. It was really something to watch," said Tom Watson, Price's playing partner.

But by the time Price reached the 17th green, his game was "leaking oil" and he knew he had to do something–and quickly. He drained a 9-footer for par, then closed out with a birdie on 18.

He finished with a 69–putting him squarely in contention going into the final round of one of the two majors he hasn't won. *AP*

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Roddick sends Agassi packing

LONDON—Andy Roddick beat world number one Andre Agassi for the first time to book his place in the Queen's Club grasscourt final with a 6-1, 6-7 (5-7), 7-6 (8-6) win here Saturday.

Roddick, according to the courtside speed gun, delivered one serve at 149 mph (239.7 kph).

If ratified that would equal the mark set by Britain's Greg Rusedski at Indian Wells in 1998 for the fastest recorded serve in professional tennis history.

He will now face Sebastien Grosjean in the final after the Frenchman beat Britain's Tim Henman–three times a Queen's finalist in the past four years–in straight sets.

Grosjean, who knocked out three-time defending champion Lleyton Hewitt on Friday, won 6-3, 6-4.

"I like grass," said Grosjean. "So I'm not surprised," he added after beating quadruple Wimbledon semifinalist Henman.

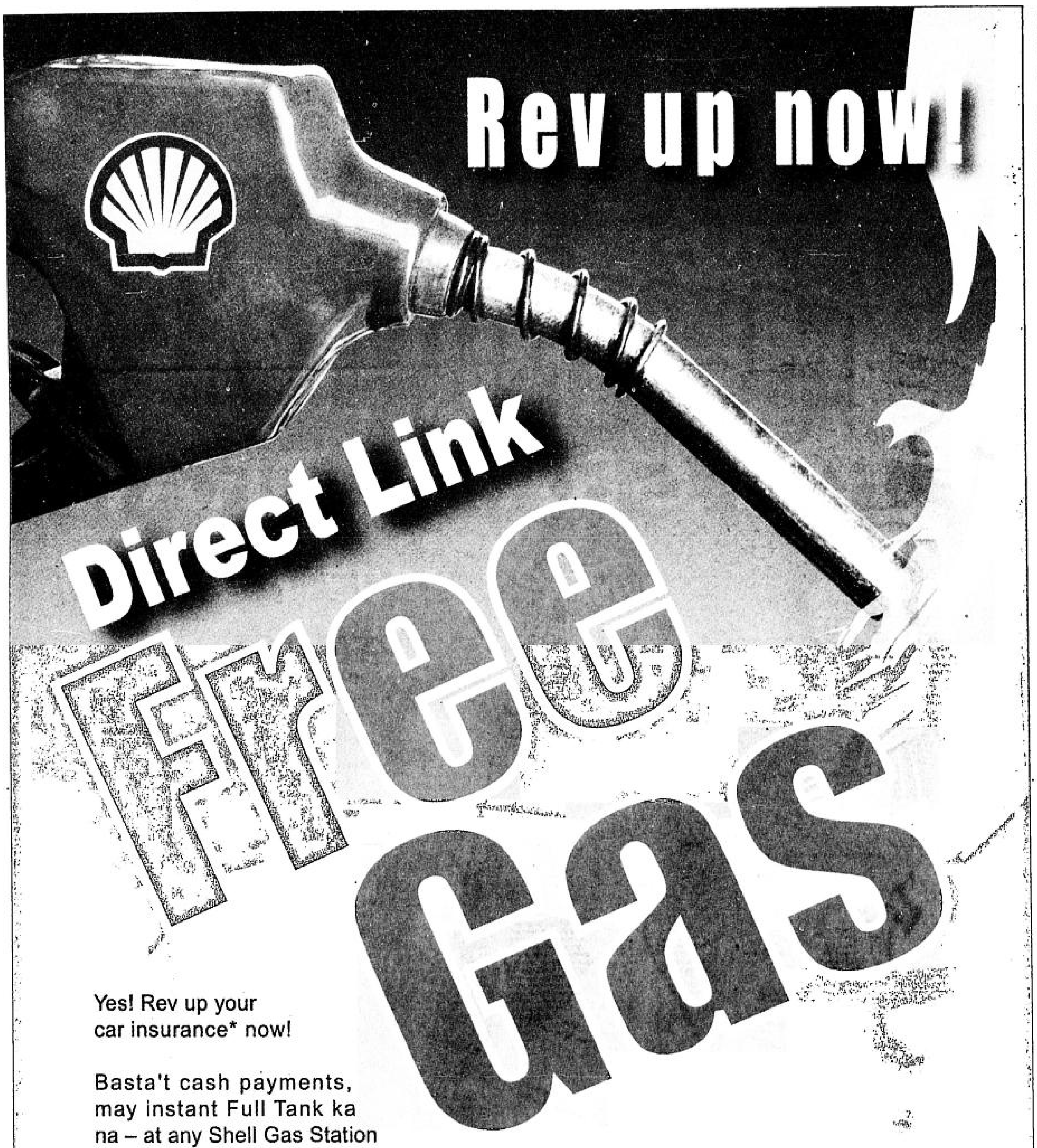
"I won my first title on grass at Nottingham in 2000.

"But maybe Tim was not 100 percent because of his shoulder," said Grosjean after Henman needed on-court treatment for a longstanding injury.

RODDICK

Earlier an enthralling all-American battle saw Roddick, at 20 thirteen years younger than Agassi, serve 27 aces.

But Roddick 4-0 down against Agassi in their previous meetings, also matched his opponent's groundstrokes and saved a match point as well. *AFP*



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SPORTSWATCH

Marathon slogan

THE INAUGURAL Manila Marathon at the Quirino Grandstand on June 22 has adopted the slogan "Run. Have Fun. Achieve," Manila Sports Council (Masco) chair Ali Atienza announced yesterday. "It will be a venue for the fun runners and the health and sports buffs, one big gathering to champion sports and physical fitness. And for the competitive, it's one venue for them to show off their wares," said Atienza as he emphasized the support provided by Superferry in the event that will feature races in the 42K, 10K, 5K and 3K categories. Others backing the footrace are the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Philippine Sports Commission and the City of Manila under Mayor Lito Atienza through the Masco and the Manila Sports Foundation.

Arcilla scores anew

TOP seed Johnny Arcilla walloped third seed Adelo Abadia, 6-2, 6-1, yesterday to win the P20,000 first leg of the Cebuana Lhuillier Tennis Circuit at the Manila Polo Club Indoor court. Arcilla needed only 65 minutes to beat Abadia and capture his fourth straight title this year. Arcilla, champion in Bohol, Mandaue and Subic, received the champion's purse worth P30,000 in cash and a trophy from Cebuana Lhuillier EVP and general manager Jean Henri Lhuillier, who is behind the event sponsored by Accel Sports, Le Soleil de Boracay, Head Penn, City Garden Hotel Makati, Oceanic 1911, All-Care Insurance, Chris Sports Plaza, Linden Suites and Key Print.

Baguio couple wins

SENIOR members Mel and Leonora Corpus banked on their course familiarity to snare the overall championship of the inaugural invitational golf tournament of the Camp John Hay Golf Club in Baguio City. The Baguio-based couple toured the par-69, Jack Nicklaus-designed course with a two-day total of 117 points–58 via the best ball and 59 under the scramble format. Smart Communications Inc. presented the club's first member-guest event supported by Wilson and Premiere Wines. Excell Contractors and Kork Inc. are the other backers. "The Invitational will now become an annual event and will be among the much-awaited golfing events in Camp John Hay," said club chair Robert John Sobrepeña, who finished in the top 10 with partner Ramon Garcia.

Serito enters final

CAGAYAN De Oro—Irene Serito proved steadier to beat Kharissa Saarenas, 6-1, 6-4, and enter the final of the girls' 16-under division against Jecille Ortellano in the adidas Tennis Challenge 2003 Saturday at the Nazareth Tennis Club hardcourts here. Ortellano advanced by whipping Amafil Salomon, 6-1, 6-3. Serito aims to match her adidas-Butuan double champion feat when she faces Joan Minoza in the junior women's 21-under class in the netfest organized by the CTW group and supported by Wilson balls, Milo and Sports Kids with a Group-3 sanction from Philippine Tennis Association. In the boys' 14-under bracket, Surigao City's Juke Alban whipped Nikko Rey Salomon, 6-3, 6-3, to advance against Cebuano Francis Largo, a 6-3, 6-2 victor over Zaldy Laga.

Slasher gets boost

THE 2003 World Slasher Cup International 8-Cock Derby got a big boost with the arrival yesterday of a big Malaysian delegation. Led by S. K. Wong, the group invited by Thunderbird Power Feeds and Univet Agricultural Products aims to learn about the different aspects of Philippine cockfighting and is set to visit the various gamefowl farms, cockpits, the Sarimanok Feeds plant and mainly to witness the action in the prestigious WSC 2003 which unfolds at the Araneta Coliseum this afternoon. "This is cocking diplomacy in action," said Thunderbird's marketing director Edwin Mapanao. The Malaysian squad is composed of 21 cockers, including Lim Choon Keng, Tay Boon Check, Chai Kau Fatt and Tan Voon Heng, among others.

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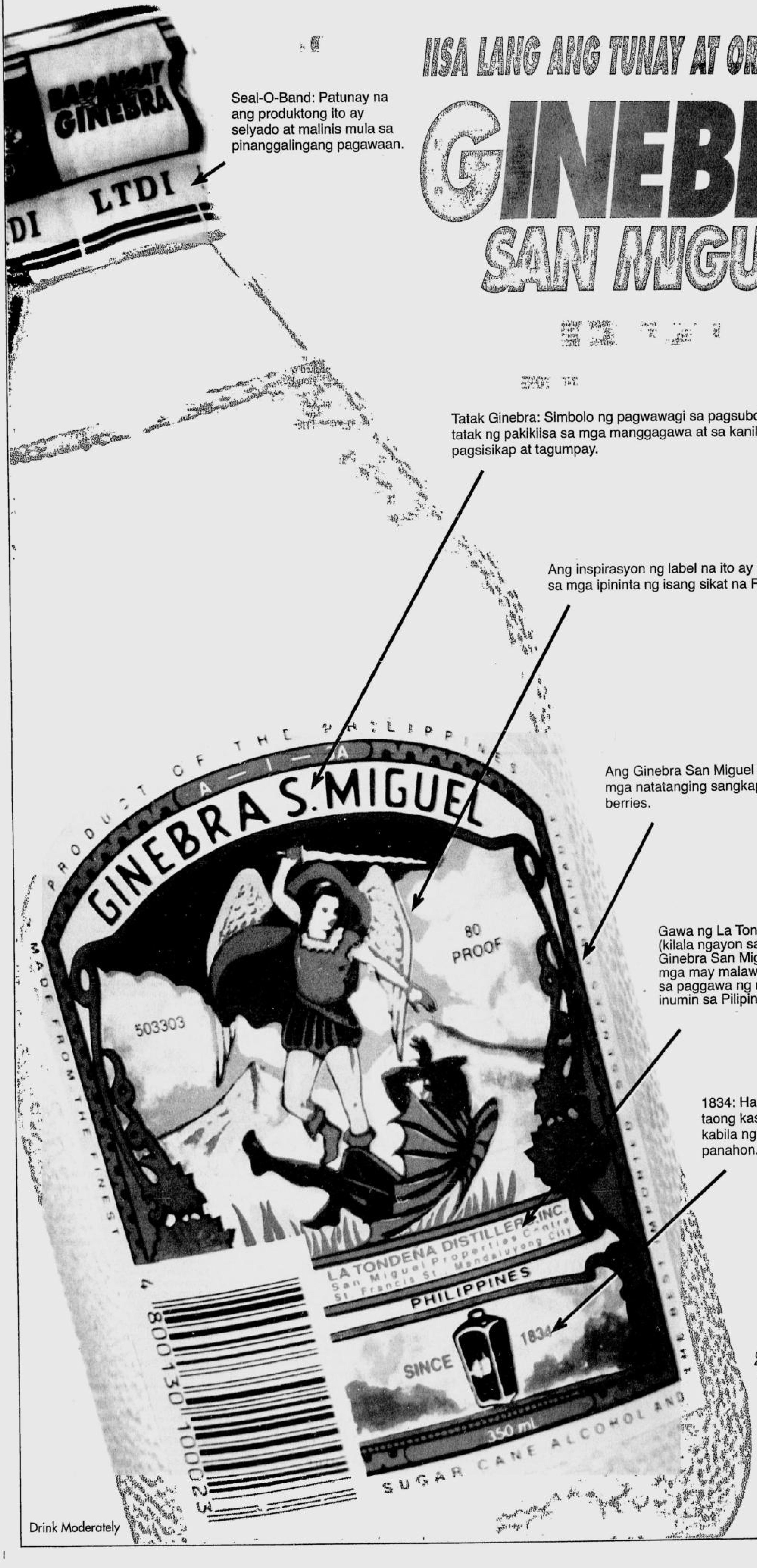
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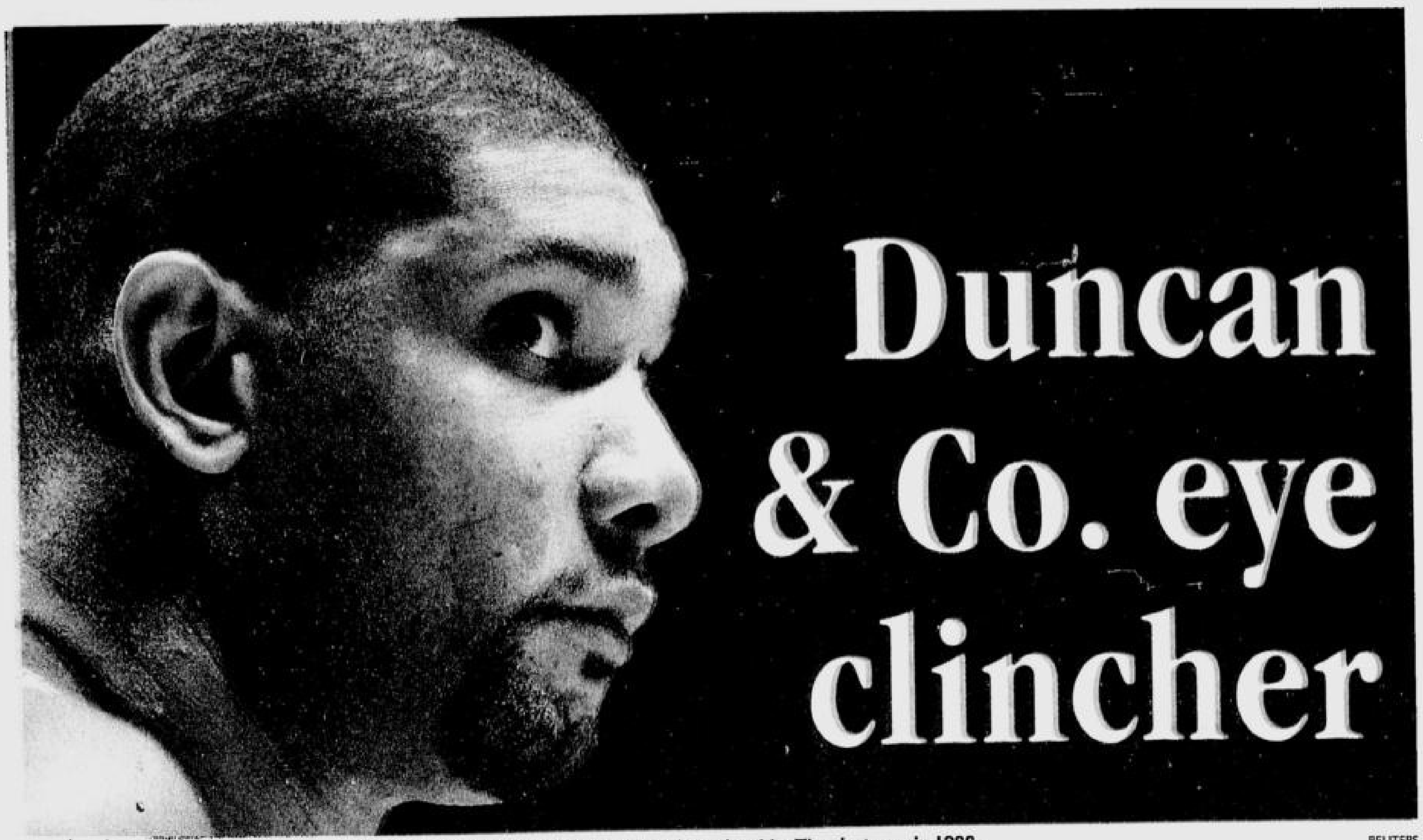

Duncan & Co. eye clincher

SAN ANTONIO star Tim Duncan says the Spurs are just hungry for another championship. They last won in 1999. REUTERS

Spurs look set to spoil Nets' last stand at Alamo

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—The New Jersey Nets headed west to the home of the Alamo on Saturday looking to make one last stand of their own when they take on the San Antonio Spurs in a Game Six showdown for the NBA championship.

The Nets will be hoping things turn out better for them on Sunday than it did for the Texans attempting to hold the fort at the famous battle against Mexican general Santa Anna in 1836 but it will require them to make a bit of history of their own.

They like things big here in Texas and after a 93-83 home loss in Game Five on Friday, the Nets have left themselves needing a huge comeback to overturn a 3-2 deficit in the best-of-seven series.

No road team has ever battled back to sweep Games Six and Seven since the league switched to the 2-3-2 format in 1985.

"It's a tough pill to swallow," Nets coach Byron Scott said after Friday's defeat.

"We knew this was a golden opportunity for us and we just didn't get the job done.

"You talk about must-wins, this is a must-win.

"The bottom line is we have to go up there and concentrate on Game Six and win that before we can think about Game Seven." If the Nets are to extend the series to a seventh game on Wednesday, they will have to find a way to limit the damage being done San Antonio's two-time league MVP Tim Duncan.

With playoff MVP-type performances, including a 29-point, 17-rebound effort on Friday, the Spurs big man has his team within one game of capturing their second championship in five years.

Individual honors, however, have meant little to the unassuming Duncan, who has his focus firmly placed on only one thing–winning another championship.

"Our motivation is, it's been a long time since (we've) been there," said Duncan, who also accepted playoff MVP honors when the Spurs won their first title in 1999.

"We just want to go in and not slip up."

More bad news for the Nets, the Spurs appear to have quickly forgotten about their woeful display in Game Four when they shot just 29 percent from the field–the third worst shooting performance in NBA finals history.

French guard Tony Parker and Malik Rose, who combined for just three points in Game Four bounced back to contribute a more respectable and important 28 in Game Five.

As the series has progressed the Spurs are getting contributions up and down the bench.

Argentine Manu Ginoboli added 12 to the cause on Friday while Steve Kerr, the little-used veteran guard, who has won four NBA titles, drained a pair of timely jumpers and made a key steal to help snuff out a New Jersey rally.

While the Nets were headed west on Saturday 20,000 New Jersey Devils fans took over their Continental Airlines Arena home to celebrate the team's Stanley Cup win.

If the Nets are to return home to the Meadowlands with another title for New Jersey fans to celebrate they will have to ease the burden on all-star guard Jason Kidd and get more from their leading scorer and rebounder Kenyon Martin.

"I feel all right," said the flu-stricken Martin, who had a sluggish outing in Game Five and finished with just four points. *AP, Reuters*

SOLAR Sports will telecast Game Six of the San Antonio Spurs-New Jersey Nets NBA championship series live at 8:30 a.m. today (Monday, June 16) on IBC-13 and at 11:30 a.m. on Channel 29 (Skycable/Homecable). The replay will be at 7 p.m. on IBC-13 and at 9 p.m. on Channel 29.

Guess who's got the lock on MVP?

SAN ANTONIO—Tim Duncan has a strong distaste for individual honors and the accompanying attention. But if the San Antonio Spurs finish off the NBA Finals on Sunday night, Duncan will be in the spotlight again.

With one more victory, Duncan almost certainly will be named the MVP of the finals for the second time in his career, which would put him in exclusive company.

Duncan, who also won the award in 1999, would be only the eighth multiple winner of that award, which was first issued in 1969. He would join an elite list of NBA greats: Shaquille O'Neal, Michael Jordan, Hakeem Olajuwon, Magic Johnson, Larry Bird, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Willis Reed.

Duncan also could become the 13th player to win the regular season and finals MVP awards, and the 20th player to win a ring in the same season he was MVP. O'Neal did it last season.

KENYON Martin rues the turnovers in Game 5.

"That stuff doesn't mean anything to me," Duncan said earlier in the series. "It's a team game."

Whether he's shy, humble or just zealously devoted to the team concept, Duncan has refused to draw attention to himself, either during his impressive career or in the finals. His teammates make sure he gets noticed, though. *AP*

Fond farewell for the 'Admiral'

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—As the San Antonio Spurs enjoy the thrill of being on the brink of winning the National Basketball Association title, they must deal with the sorrow of saying goodbye to David Robinson.

San Antonio can win the best-of-seven NBA Finals by beating New Jersey here Sunday. The Spurs own a 3-2 lead on the Nets, who must win to force a seventh game here Wednesday.

Robinson has spent all 14 of his NBA seasons with the Spurs but will retire after the finals. The 37-year-old center was the 1995 NBA Most Valuable Player.

"To win this championship would be phenomenal," Robinson said. "Who could write a script like this? This is awesome.

"I'm just so happy to be in this spot, with a team that can win a championship. We're one game away from winning everything. You couldn't script it any better."

THIS is awesome, says the retiring Robinson.

The seven-foot All-Star, nicknamed "Admiral" from his college days at the US Naval Academy, hopes to ship out a champion again as he sails into the sunset.

"I have just enjoyed it. It has all been fun to me," Robinson said. "I don't really think about what it's going to be like after not having the games to play anymore. *AFP*

Hampton outpitches Moyer

MUCH-TRAVELED Mike Hampton outdueled veteran Jamie Moyer as the Atlanta Braves edged the Seattle Mariners 3-1 in Interleague action on Saturday.

Hampton (3-3), who is playing for his fourth team in five years, tossed seven innings of two-hit ball for the win.

He got a lot of help from closer John Smoltz, who allowed a run in two innings, that coming after the Mariners filled the bases in the eighth with no outs.

The 40-year-old Moyer (10-3) had his seven-game win-streak snapped, with Gary Sheffield doing much of the damage.

Sheffield's first-inning single got Atlanta on the board.

He later doubled and came around to score the Braves' third run.

In New York, the Yankees got three runs in their first at-bats before rain stopped the game for nearly 1 1/2 hours, then continued to pour it on after play resumed, drubbing the St. Louis Cardinals 13-4.

In form Hideki Matsui doubled off loser Matt Morris (7-4) with the bases loaded to get the Yanks off to a fast start, then knocked in fourth run with a second-inning single.

Former Yankee Tino Martinez also homered twice, the first off Andy Pettitte (6-6), to score all four St. Louis runs. *AFP*

CLOSE ONE: The Braves' Gary Sheffield picks himself up after dodging a close pitch from the Mariners' Jamie Moyer. AFP

Outstanding Owen wins praise

OWEN: Goal thief.

LONDON—England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson on Saturday praised Michael Owen as his team's supreme 'goal-thief' and insisted that his talismanic striker will get even better.

The 23-year-old Liverpool hitman took his international goal tally to 22 from 50 games in the 2-1 Euro 2004 win over Slovakia on Wednesday, but the Swede says there's even more room for improvement.

"In Sweden, we use the word 'maltjur' and Michael Owen is really a goal-thief as he's always there," said the England coach.

"He is 23 and should get better and better. He doesn't need to get better and better." *AFP*

Pacquiao lacks self-discipline

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

MUCH as I admire Manny Pacquiao, I deplore the way he figured in a bar incident in General Santos at around 2 a.m. on Friday. As the IBF super-bantamweight champion, Pacquiao was supposed to be in bed early as part of his training for a forthcoming title bout against New York-based Mexican Emmanuel Lucero in Los Angeles on July 26. But instead he was out of the house spending the night on a drunken spree with friends. Where is self-discipline here?

Pacquiao reportedly went wild, smashing beer bottles, chairs and tables and overturning motorbikes parked outside the bar after the club singer refused to go out with the boxer, saying she was "already married and was not working for outside business."

There is no question that Pacquiao, 24, is a good boxer, but exemplary he is not. Nor will he ever be, because truly exemplary and great boxers worthy of emulation do not stay up all night and get into barroom troubles.

Early this year, Pacquiao incurred the ire of the Philippine Sportswriters Association when he snubbed the annual PSA Awards Night at the Holiday Inn where he was to receive a trophy as "2002 Athlete of the Year" together with Busan Asian Games equestrian gold medal winner Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski. The boxer claimed he was suffering from a bum stomach that day, but reports said he was just feigning illness because he was feeling bad after losing a hefty sum in a game of billiards the night before. Is success spoiling Pacquiao?

Pacquiao's camp, led by business manager Rod Nazario, had wanted to send the boxer to California early to train under renowned Freddie Roach, but the plan was aborted when the champ was unable to get a US working visa on time.

***

'SABONG' OLYMPICS. It hardly gets special treatment from the media like basketball, but cockfighting or "sabong" in local parlance, is one of the country's biggest crowd-drawers in terms of spectator attendance. Being the Filipinos' favorite pastime, daily cockfights are held before thousands of aficionados in more than 1,300 cockpits all over the Philippines.

Starting today and on June 18 and 20, cockfighting marks another milestone when the final leg of the 2003 World Slasher 8-Cock Derby is staged at the Araneta Coliseum, featuring the cream of the crop.

Widely regarded as the "Olympics of Cockfighting," a term I coined many years ago to describe the World Slasher Derby, taking part in this year's event are SMB boss Danding Cojuangco, Big Dome owner Nene Araneta, the ageless James Chiongbian, Peping Cojuangco and partner Esting Teopaco, three-term Rizal Gov. Ito Ynares, co-host Jun Santiago, the undisputed cockers' cocker; Mario Villamor of Phoenix fame, popular lawyer Rudy Salud, 2001 champion Roger Roberts, an electrical engineer from Atlanta, Georgia, who will be fielding anew his awesome Hatchets-Thunderbird roosters; Chuck Berry of Oklahoma, Fil-Americans Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman of California, 2002 winners Dickie Lim and the tandem of Frank Berin and Nonoy Gonzales, Pampanga's Madlambayan and Jingco brothers, Alex Escalona and this year's first leg co-champions Claude Bautista, the Pol Estrellado-Manny Santos tandem and William Go.

The foreign-flavored World Slasher Derby was launched in 1990, with Jun Santiago and Vic Amante emerging joint champions. Colorful American cocker-breeder Carol Nesmith won back-to-back championships in 1997 and 1998 with his fabled Blackwater entry, but his career abruptly ended when he was arrested and jailed for a federal offense.

This time, all eyes will be focused on the lean but mean American delegation again. Will they beat their Filipino counterparts?

Incidentally, many American breeders have closed shop following the passage of the amended US Animal Welfare Act which bans possession of fighting cocks and shipping them out of the United States for cockfighting purposes.

"It's unfair," said many of the American cocker-breeders of the federal act which was passed without much opposition because it was supported by the formidable US-based Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. "It killed the sport of cockfighting and deprived us of our livelihood."

‘Charmer’ prevails at SLLP

ABSOLUTE Charmer simply loves to run at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

The slightly favored galloper picked up her fourth win in five starts thus far at the Carmona, Cavite racetrack by ruling the second leg of the Imported Stakes Series yesterday.

Sharing the limelight was Hermie Esguerra's Kayang Kaya, who routed her rivals in the Rep. Eric Singson Cup.

Coaxed by substitute rider Fernando “Dhunoy” Raquel Jr., Absolute Charmer started fifth and last in the field of five imported fillies before blowing past her foes at the far turn and coasting home with plenty to spare.

Absolute Charmer, a three-year-old chestnut daughter of Great Britain sire Entrepreneur out of New Zealand mare Banter, clocked 1:27 flat (12.5-23.5-24.5-26.5), the fastest time over 1,400 meters thus far at the SLLP. She bagged P270,000 for the Gonzalez Stable.

You Know That (Jeffril Zarate) came in six lengths behind the winner, while Buena Sera (Dominador Borbe Jr.) finished third, followed by American Dame (Pat Dilema) and Audrey's Savings (Jesse Guce).

Edwin Villanueva

Archers battle Tigers in UAAP opener

GAMES ON JULY 12 (*Araneta Coliseum*)
1 p.m.—Opening ceremonies
2 p.m.—FEU vs Adamson
4 p.m.—La Salle vs UST

By Dennis U. Eroa

WITH arch-rival and titleholder Ateneo watching from the sidelines, rookie-laden La Salle begins its difficult climb for redemption when it tackles University of Santo Tomas at the start of the UAAP basketball championship on July 12 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Playmaking wizard Mike Cortez is no longer around, same with rebounding demon Adonis Sta. Maria, but the Green Archers have retained their grit and spunk as they go up against the Growling Tigers before an expected capacity crowd in the 4 p.m. main game.

Far Eastern University, toughened by its PBL experience, clashes with dangerous Adamson in the opener at 2 p.m.

UAAP president Jose A. Capistrano Jr. of host Ateneo told the INQUIRER yesterday that the 66th season of the country's most popular collegiate league will not only focus on men's basketball but all sports in the calendar.

Two-time MVP Rich Alvarez, an immovable force in the shaded lane, Wesley Gonzales, Larry Fonacier, LA Tenorio and Magnum Membrere, who missed last year's action, will lead the Blue Eagles as they debut on July 13 against the team they shocked during last year's Final Four–University of the East.

Ateneo has also recruited Claiford Arao, a 6-foot-5 banger from multi-titled San Beda Red Cubs.

La Salle, which lost to Ateneo in an epic finals last year, is parading a youthful roster spiced by seven new recruits.

“It's going to be hard but the good thing is the young bloods are hungrier and more determined to prove that they belong,” said La Salle mentor Franz Pumaren.

La Salle's reputation as an academy of winning was proven when it won four straight titles from 1998 to 2001, before Ateneo snapped a 14-year title drought with last year's win.

“We're aiming for the Final Four and take it from there,” said La Salle's soft-spoken team manager Terry Capistrano. “As always, we're going to give it our best shot.”

The rookies are Ryan Araña, Joseph Casio, Oliver Cua, Allen Gatchalian, Mark Benitez, Jerwin Gaco and Peter James Walsham.

Aside from losing Cortez and Sta. Maria, La Salle also lost BJ Manalo to injuries, leaving Mac Cardona, Joseph Yeo, Carlo Sharma and Ty Tang to carry on the fight.

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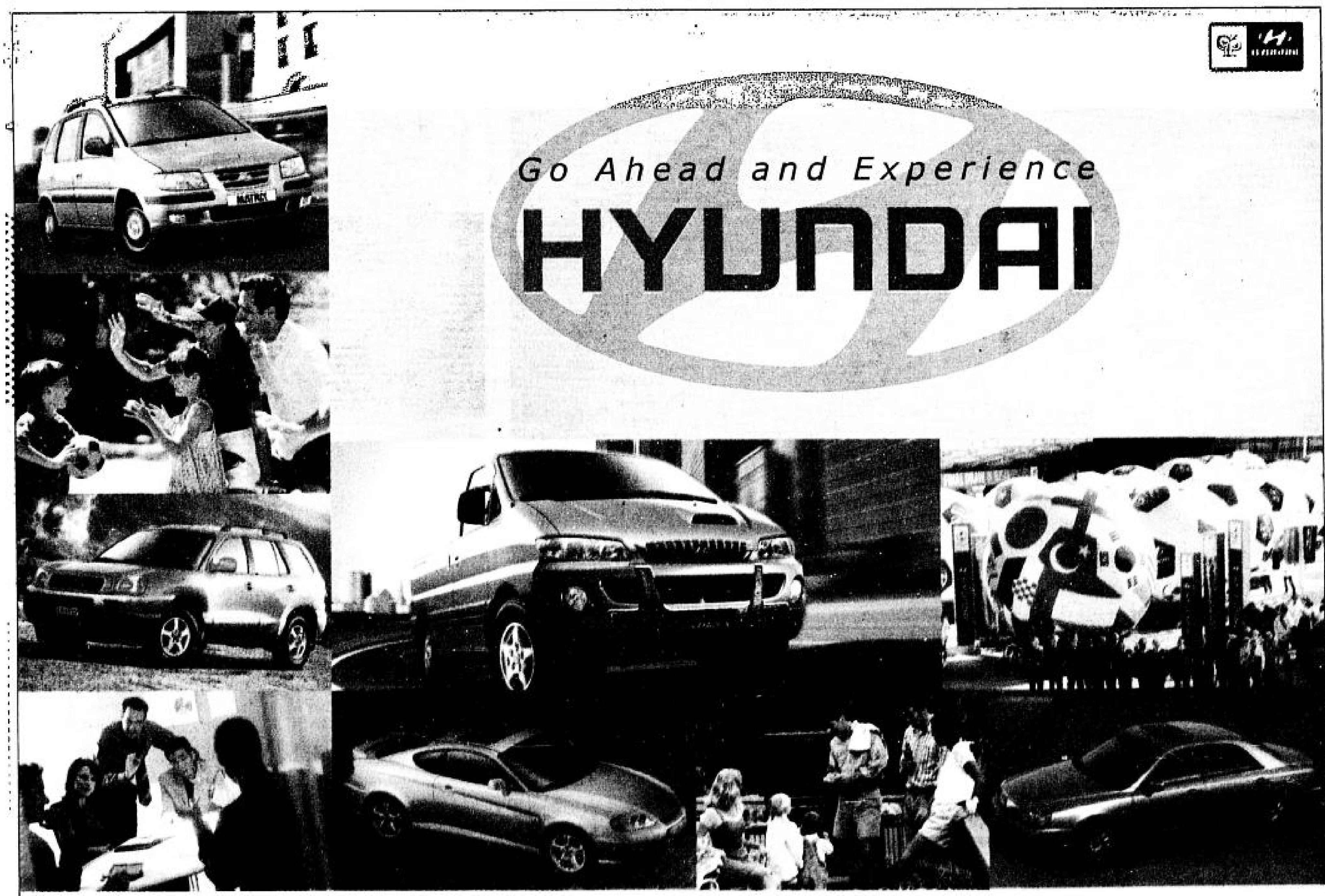
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SPORTS

CANADIAN GRAND PRIX

Williams takes top 2 spots

MONTREAL—Ralf Schumacher has figured out qualifying and Juan Pablo Montoya has found a way to win.

If the teammates can continue their recent success, Williams-BMW should have a banner day in the Canadian Grand Prix.

Schumacher and Montoya took the top two spots in qualifying Saturday at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, seemingly carrying over their momentum from Monaco two weeks ago. Schumacher started from the pole in that race and Montoya came from third to score his first victory of the season.

Both were strong in qualifying for Sunday's race, with Schumacher posting a time of 1 minute, 15.529 seconds on the 4.36-km (2.709-mile), 15-turn track.

Montoya, who started from the pole here last year, was second with a lap of 1:15.923.

"You keep winning the poles, I'll keep winning the wins," Montoya joked to his teammate after.

But Schumacher badly wants a victory—he's winless since Malaysia last season, a span of 22 races.

"I certainly have had a difficult time since my last victory," Schumacher said. "But (Monaco) has given the team a very big push."

Lurking right behind the Williams teammates will be five-time Formula One champion Michael Schumacher, the defending race winner who qualified third in a Ferrari with a time of 1:16.047. *AP*

WILLIAMS driver Ralf Schumacher sits in his car during a timed session for the Canadian Grand Prix. REUTERS

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Russian tanker sets 'breast' world mark

BARCELONA—Russia's Dmitry Komornikov set a world record in the 200-meter breaststroke with a time of 2:09.52 on Saturday.

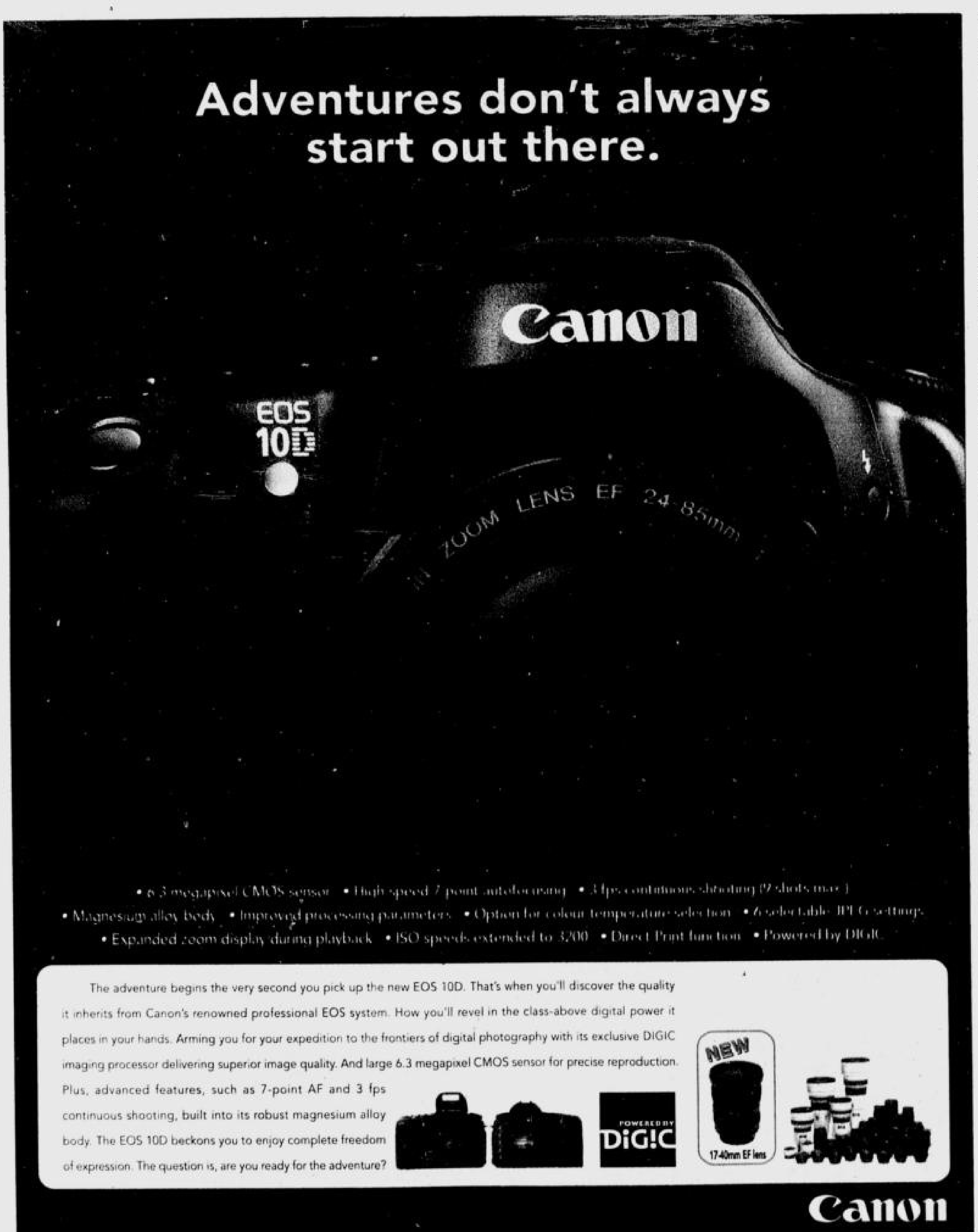
Komornikov's swim at the Mare Nostrum event in Barcelona beat the old mark of 2:09.97, set by Kosuke Kitajima of Japan in the Asian Games in Pusan in October 2002.

"I went fast in the first 100 meters and as I was feeling good I decided to maintain the rhythm," Komornikov said. "I wasn't thinking about breaking the world record, though."

It was the first world record set at the Sant Andreu pool in Barcelona, organizers said.

Barcelona hosts the World Swimming Championships next month but the swimming will be held at a specially constructed pool in the Palau Sant Jordi. *Reuters*

KOMORNIKOV REUTERS



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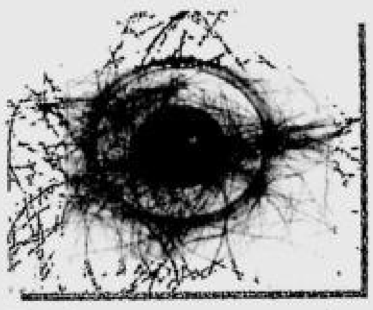

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Meralco seeks rescheduling of ₱6B in maturing loans

By Ronnel W. Domingo

UTILITY giant Manila Electric Co. said it would ask its creditors this week to allow a rescheduling of payments on P6 billion worth of short-term loans due in July.

Meralco president Jesus Francisco said in an interview that company officials would meet with creditors today or tomorrow to apprise them of the utility's current financial concerns.

"We would update them on how we are doing with our refund, among other things," Francisco said.

The Meralco official earlier said the company had to pay some P11 billion in interest and principal payments due in July, September, October and December.

Francisco said such payment schedule would limit Meralco's ability to implement its P30-billion refund program only up to the second phase this year.

He said Meralco's cash flow allowed it to disburse only P3.3 billion in refund money each year.

The utility is currently implementing the refund program's first phase, which is estimated to cost up to P2.2 billion. However, Francisco said the company was ready to implement Phase 2 as early as August.

"We are earmarking P2.3 billion for Phase 2 covering customers using between 101 kilowatt-hours and 200 kWh," he said.

This meant Meralco was going beyond its yearly limit of P3.3 billion a year.

"That's why we would ask our creditors if we could reschedule our debt payments due in July," Francisco said.

Meantime, the militant urban poor group Anakpawis filed with the Supreme Court a 28-page petition seeking to compel the Energy Regulatory Commission and Meralco to implement an immediate refund for all customers.

Anakpawis said the high court's refund order issued last November did not mention a phased refund scheme.

The ERC had approved an initial phase that covers customers using up to 100 kWh while the coverage range of Phase 2 has yet to be determined.

In an earlier interview, Meralco's Francisco said the firm was also looking at implementing a third and fourth phase that would cover the rest of residential customers and all commercial and industrial customers, respectively.

Banks' bad loans eased to P253.74B in March

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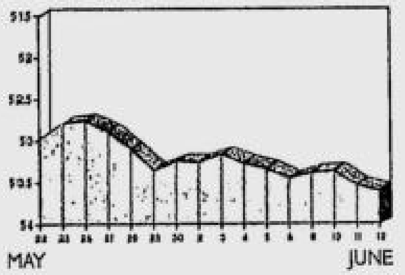

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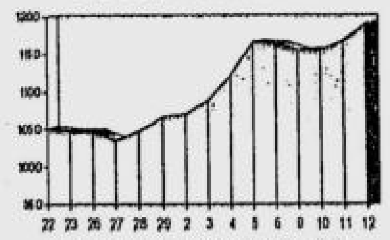
STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Rally seen to continue

THE CURRENT stock market rally will likely continue but may end by next month, analysts have warned.

Last week, the stock market's main index, the Phisix, ended 27.22 points or 2.34 percent higher at 1,191.06 from the previous week as domestic interest rates declined and on improving foreign investor interest.

Sustained bullish run-up in major markets abroad also boosted local market

RALLY/ B6

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RATIO INCHED UP TO 15.52%

Banks' bad loans eased to ₱253.74B in March

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE NON-PERFORMING loans of commercial banks inched up to 15.52 percent of total loan portfolio in April from 15.5 percent in March, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

The NPL ratio, however, slowed down from 18.23 percent during the same period last year following efforts to address the bad loans through either restructuring or foreclosure on mortgaged assets.

In April this year, the BSP said the level of NPLs actually reversed its uptrend with a 0.07 percent contraction to P253.74 billion compared to P253.92 billion in March.

The latest NPL level also stood much lower than the P301.29 billion recorded in April last year, it said.

The ratio to total loans still increased in April this year compared to March, however, because of the reduction in the total loan portfolio used as the base.

The industry's total loan portfolio eased by 0.22 percent to P1.63 trillion in April from P1.64 trillion in March, reflecting banks' continued cautious stance in lending.

On the other hand, the industry's non-performing assets—or the sum of NPLs and the real and other properties owned and acquired (Ropoa)—rose to 13.72 percent of total loans in April from 13.43 percent in March.

The BSP said there was a 0.74-percent build-up of NPAs during the period. However, it noted that the NPA ratio was still better than the 14.89 percent in April last year.

Net of interbank loans, the NPL ratio improved by 0.04 percentage point to 17.44 percent from 17.48 percent in March with the 0.14-percent expansion in regular lending activities.

"The industry heightened efforts to restructure and foreclose on collateral securities. Surpassing the previous months' marginal growth, restructured loans swelled by 4 percent to P135.12 billion, whereas Ropoa posted an upsurge of 1.85 percent to P188.83 billion," the BSP said.

The industry also posted favorable NPL and NPA coverages (measured as a ratio of loan-loss reserves), the BSP pointed out.

"The NPL coverage ratio improved to 50.61 percent from 49.93 percent last month and from 43.93 percent a year ago. This was set off by the 1.29-percent increment in loan-loss reserves to P128.41 billion," the BSP said.

"Moreover, as the industry raised its NPA reserves (loan-loss reserves plus provision for Ropoa) by 3.05 percent to P141.32 billion, the NPA coverage ratio (NPA valuation reserves to NPA) posted a boost from 31.22 percent last month to 31.93 percent," the BSP explained.

The ratio of gross restructured loans to total loans continued to advance with a marginal growth of 0.33 percentage point to 8.26 percent from March as gross restructured loans surged by 4 percent to P135.12 billion.

The industry's past-due ratio went up further to 16.51 percent in April from 16.34 percent in March as total past-due loans widened to P272.75 billion from P270.48 billion.

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Parayno opposes layoff plan for BIR

By Michelle V. Remo

REVENUE Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. has recommended to the Department of Finance the full absorption of the estimated 12,000 employees of the Bureau of Internal Revenue following moves to restructure the revenue agency.

In an interview, Parayno said the government need not lay off any BIR employee to push through with the suggested reforms for the BIR in order to improve its revenue collection efforts.

"I recommended this to (Finance) Secretary (Jose Isidro) Camacho, and he's also proposing the same to Congress," Paráyno said.

He added that giving the employees better remuneration would result in better performance of their work.

Various versions of the bill replacing the BIR with a new revenue agency that will run with a corporate setup are currently being heard in Congress. The move to replace the BIR is seen aimed at improving the tax effort (percentage share of tax collection to gross domestic product) of the bureau, which has suffered a decline since 1997.

In the proposed bills, employees are not assured of keeping their jobs as it only recommends preferential absorption of the BIR employees. This means only those whose qualifications exceed applicants from outside will be retained.

The bills also allow BIR employees to be exempted from the salary standardization law, thereby giving the bureau the prerogative of increasing salaries.

Parayno said he recommended that all employees be allowed to keep their jobs and be given higher compensation, but at the same time be required to perform in accordance with the standards set by the BIR.

"There should be a mechanism by which employees who will not perform well despite better salaries could be terminated," Parayno said.

The commissioner said he was supportive of the provisions in the bill that would grant higher salaries for employees, more resources for the BIR, flexibility in hiring and removing personnel and fiscal autonomy for the bureau.

From the current setup, the bills propose that the BIR should assume a corporate character to be led by a board of directors and headed by a chief operating officer.

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PNOC unit to seek adviser on $100-M pipeline project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PETROLEUM exploration arm of state-run Philippine National Oil Co. would bid out in the next few weeks a contract for financial advising on its proposed $100-million natural gas pipeline project.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said PNOC Exploration Corp. was all set to spearhead the project, which has aroused interest of several private firms.

"More gas companies are looking at a possible participation in the project as we were able to promote this in the recently held World Gas Conference in Tokyo," Perez said.

The pipeline, called Bat-Man 1, would deliver natural gas from the Malampaya consortium's processing plant in Batangas to Metro Manila.

A second pipeline that would be named Bat-Man 2 is seen to bring the gas from Manila to Bataan..

"Aside from the pipeline, gas companies from around the world had also been briefed about the proposed conversion of the diesel-fired Sucat power plant complex for use of natural gas as well as that in Limay, Bataan," Perez said.

He explained that the projects would not only serve to promote the country's nascent natural gas industry, but would also add much-needed generating capacity.

The official had said earlier that a rising trend in electricity consumption meant that the country's reserve generating capacity was being depleted.

PEREZ

In a statement last week, Energy Undersecretary JV Emmanuel de Dios, who represented the country in the Tokyo gas meet, said he had urged international gas companies to provide needed infrastructure that would bring the Malampaya gas to its potential markets.

De Dios said such infrastructure included pipeline networks for bulk and distribution deliveries, terminals for liquefied natural gas, refilling stations for vehicles that run on compressed natural gas (CNG), and ancillary facilities.

Held every three years by the International Gas Union, the World Gas Conference 2003 was attended by 4,800 delegates, including those from international organizations, energy ministers, energy related fora, and researchers from private firms, universities and institutions.

The conference coincided with a trade exhibition that attracted 230 companies from 40 countries.

The DOE added that its team who went to Tokyo was able to meet separately with gas companies from Europe, the United States and Japan to convince them further to invest in the country.

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Globe Telecom to issue P2.5B in retail bonds

By Elena R. Torrijos

GLOBE Telecom plans to issue P2.5 billion worth of five-year, fixed-rate retail bonds early next year to refinance relatively high interest-bearing debt.

"We have some expensive loans, which we're looking at refinancing with this issue," Globe chief finance officer Delfin Gonzalez said in an interview last Friday.

The Ayala-controlled publicly listed telecommunications company was also considering paying down the existing debt with internally generated cash, Gonzalez added.

Though the planned bond offering was still scheduled for next year, Globe has already asked financial institutions to submit proposals to underwrite or arrange the deal.

Gonzales explained that the bonds would have to be registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, therefore the company needed about six months to set the groundwork in place.

Globe has already started evaluating two to three proposals it has already received but it was also waiting for a few more proposals.

Gonzalez explained that the telecommunications firm decided on a peso retail issue of not more than five years because of several reasons.

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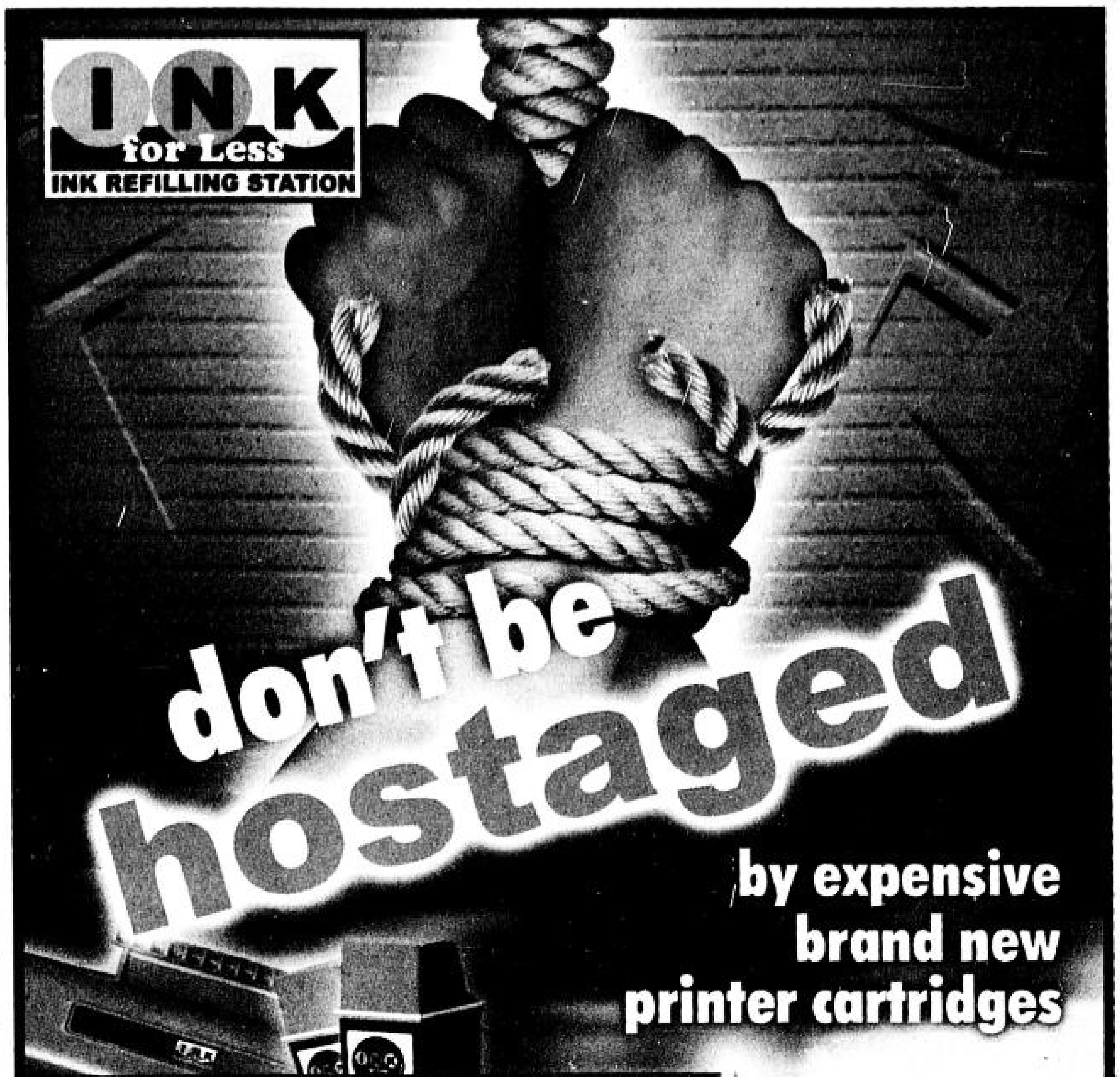

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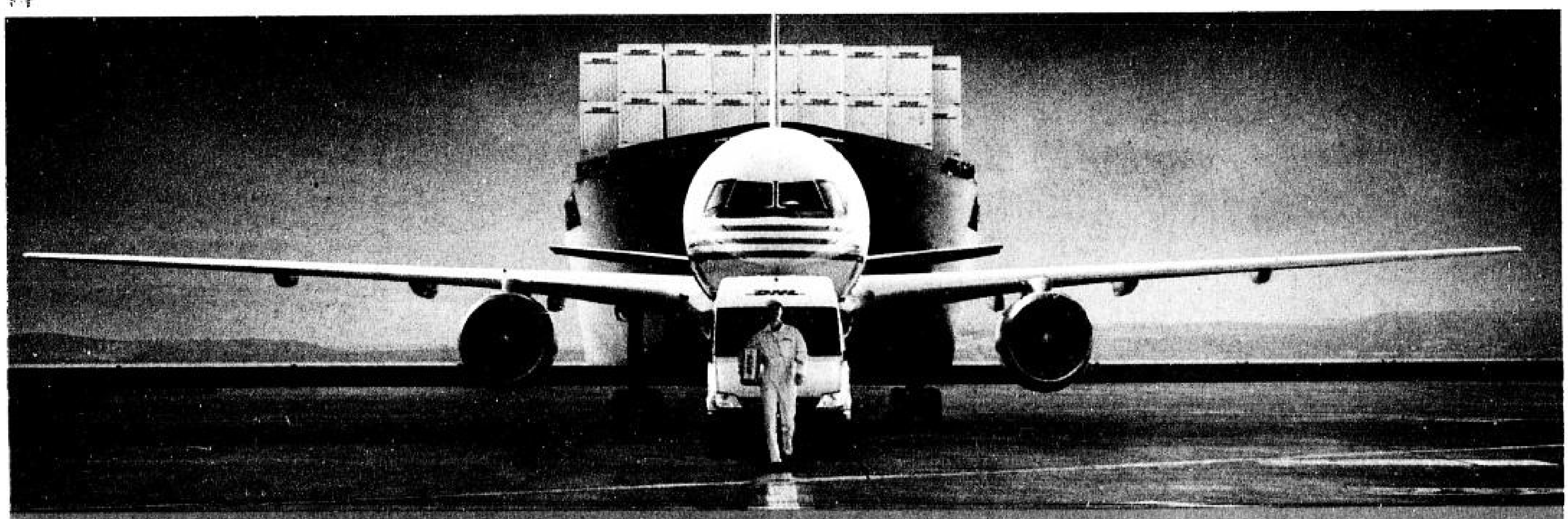

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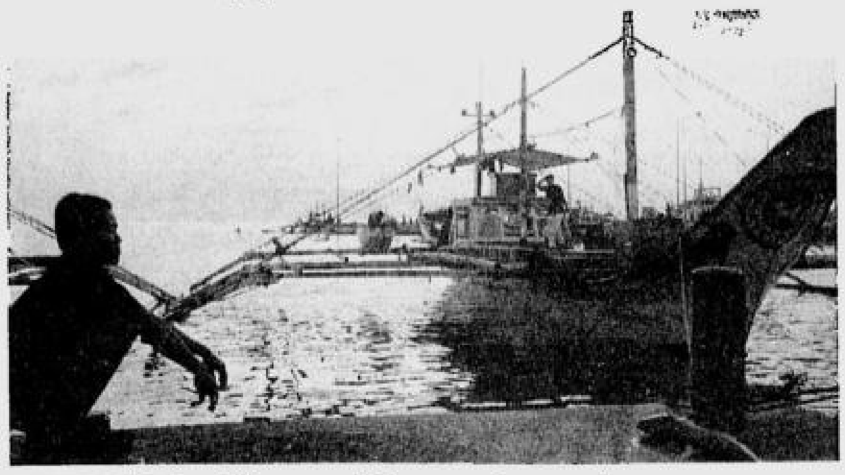
GenSan Fish Port embarks on ₱1.52-B expansion

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT is rushing the $26.171-million (P1.526 billion) expansion of the Gen. Santos Fish Port Complex to meet a surge in demand for tuna exports to the US and Europe.

Department of Agriculture officials said the expansion of the 32-hectare fish port facility—the country's most modern and second largest fish port—would allow canneries in the tuna-rich Socsargen area to maximize their capacity in time for the widened access to overseas markets.


GENSAN Fish Port: The country's largest and most modern. EDWIN BACASMAS

The expansion project of the port, which was built using Japanese funds in 1998, will involve the construction of 2 wharves, a 1,500-metric ton cold storage facility, a wastewater treatment plant, port handling equipment and power substation. At least 90 percent of the cost would be borne by the People's Republic of China with the balance to be funded by the government.

The expansion is expected to boost the fish port's capacity to handle more catch, speed up uploading time and accommodate larger shipping vessels. The project will directly benefit seven of the country's top ten tuna canneries that are based in the area.

The Department of Trade and Industry has projected a 20 percent growth in the country's canned tuna exports after the US and Europe granted tariff concession and higher quota allocations to the Philippines.

Last year, the US shifted the basis of its import quota on Philippines canned tuna from a percentage of the Americans' total production to a portion of its total consumption. This means more Philippine canned tuna exports would get a preferred duty of 6 percent as Americans increase their tuna consumption. The US expects Philippine canned tuna to grow by 5.8 percent from 2.4 million cases annually to 2.54 million cases.

Early this week, the European Union agreed to cut its duties on 25,000 metric tons of canned tuna from the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia from 24 percent to 12 percent for the next 5 years. This would increase the exports to Europe by more than 10 percent to 2.8 million cases and allow the Philippines to expand its market from institutional buyers to retail consumers.

When will insurance taxes be cut?

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE AUTOMOTIVE industry has raised a big howl over the plan of the House to double the excise tax on the smallest-sized vehicles to 30 percent and to shift the basis of all taxes on manufacturer's price instead of engine displacement. The industry claims this will dampen sales. I suspect the industry also does not relish being lumped in the same category as movies and *jai alai*.

But the Senate is coming to the rescue. The Senate's alternate plan would cut the excise tax rate to 2 percent. As a result, a car buyer can save as much as P70,000.

Now, if only the Senate would turn its enormous powers to putting some sanity to the tax structure of the non-life insurance industry. For example, when you buy a fire insurance policy on your house, the invoice will show four—count them, four—separate taxes. There is nothing else in this planet that you can buy where the invoice specifies four separate taxes.

The first three taxes are: 12.5 percent documentary stamp, 10 percent value added and 2 percent fire service. The fourth is local government tax. Depending on where you live, this can be anywhere from 0.15 to 0.85 percent. The total tax is 24.65 to 25.25 percent. Either way, this is, far and away, the highest tax rate in the whole, wide world.

When I entered the insurance business a long, long time ago, the documentary stamp tax was 1.5 percent of premium. Marcos raised it to 3 percent, Aquino to 7.5 percent and Ramos to the current 12.5 percent.

In Singapore, the stamp tax is one solitary Singapore dollar per policy regardless of the amount of the premium.

Not only is tax heavy, it is the most tedious tax to pay. The tax code actually says fifty centavos per four pesos of premium or fraction thereof. That fraction results in tremendous amount of useless work all around. You buy panes of taxes from the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and paste them on to every invoice. Or you buy a machine from BIR loaded with stamp value. When the machine runs out, you bring it back to BIR to have it reloaded. Why not just pay 12.5 percent of premium, and forget the fraction? This avoids a all the red tape.

The stamp tax used to be paid when the premium was collected, as provided for in the tax code. Now, the BIR has ruled that the stamp tax is due as soon as the policy is issued. Whether the policy is paid or not is immaterial. In effect, the BIR has imposed a new tax without the benefit of congressional enactment. The insurance industry has submitted all sorts of position papers on this subject over the past two years to the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Department of Finance.

The industry has heard nothing from the two government agencies.

Last month, yet another position paper was submitted to Finance. It is beginning to look like Finance will just sit on it.

The British introduced the stamp tax in the US during the colonial era. The tax was one of the major causes of the American Revolution. After the revolution was won, the Americans erased the tax from the books. Do we need a revolution here to free ourselves from this pernicious tax?

The value-added tax took the place of the 2 percent premium tax which the company used to pay and could pass on to the insured. It also replaced the 3 percent (later raised to 6 percent) contractor's tax, which agents and brokers used to pay on their commissions.

The fire service tax was supposed to raise funds to buy fire trucks.

It never happened. The money, like all taxes, wound up at the National Treasury where it got lost in the shuffle. Have you ever seen a brand-new fire truck that is not a donation from the Japanese government?

The local government tax is supposed to raise money for the city hall or the *municipio*. But it is paid to the local government where the policy is issued, not where the insured property is located.

I have a client whose policy is issued here in Makati. But his property is in Laoag City. So, my client contributes to buy a fire truck for Makati, if that fire truck is bought at all, which will be of absolutely no use to him if his property in Laoag City burns down.

Out of the amount of money you pay for your fire insurance policy, fully one-fourth goes to pay for taxes instead of insurance protection.

Also, the government takes a bigger chunk of the premium than the agent or broker does in commissions.

A non-life insurance policy is taxed as if it were a luxury item. But when you buy a fire insurance policy on your house, you are merely protecting yourself from bankruptcy in case the house burns down. It is like installing a fire alarm system or erecting a fence around the property. Why should your basic right to self-protection be so heavily taxed?

GOINGS-ON

BLIMS exhibit

IN line with its 25th anniversary celebration, furniture industry leader BLIMS has lined up a series of activities for this year. The first was the Italian Leather Collection which was held from May 31 to June 14 at the Glorietta 1 in Ayala Mall, Ayala Center, Makati City.

Dubbed as "Skin Is In," the two-week exhibit showcased a collection of the best Italian leather brands from around the world.

Two more exhibits will be held in October and December this year. In a span of 25 years, BLIMS has built its reputation as one of the premier retail furniture stores in the country today.

HSBC wins award

HSBC has won the "Best Domestic Bond House in the Philippines" award given by Asiamoney Domestic Bank Awards 2003.

Asiamoney's Domestic Bank Awards recognize the best domestic commercial bank, bond house and equity house in 12 countries in Asia. Besting local and foreign banks, HSBC emerged as the top player in the Philippine bond market for the second year in a row.

HSBC retains its place "as architect of the bond market," the regional financial magazine said in its May 2003 issue.

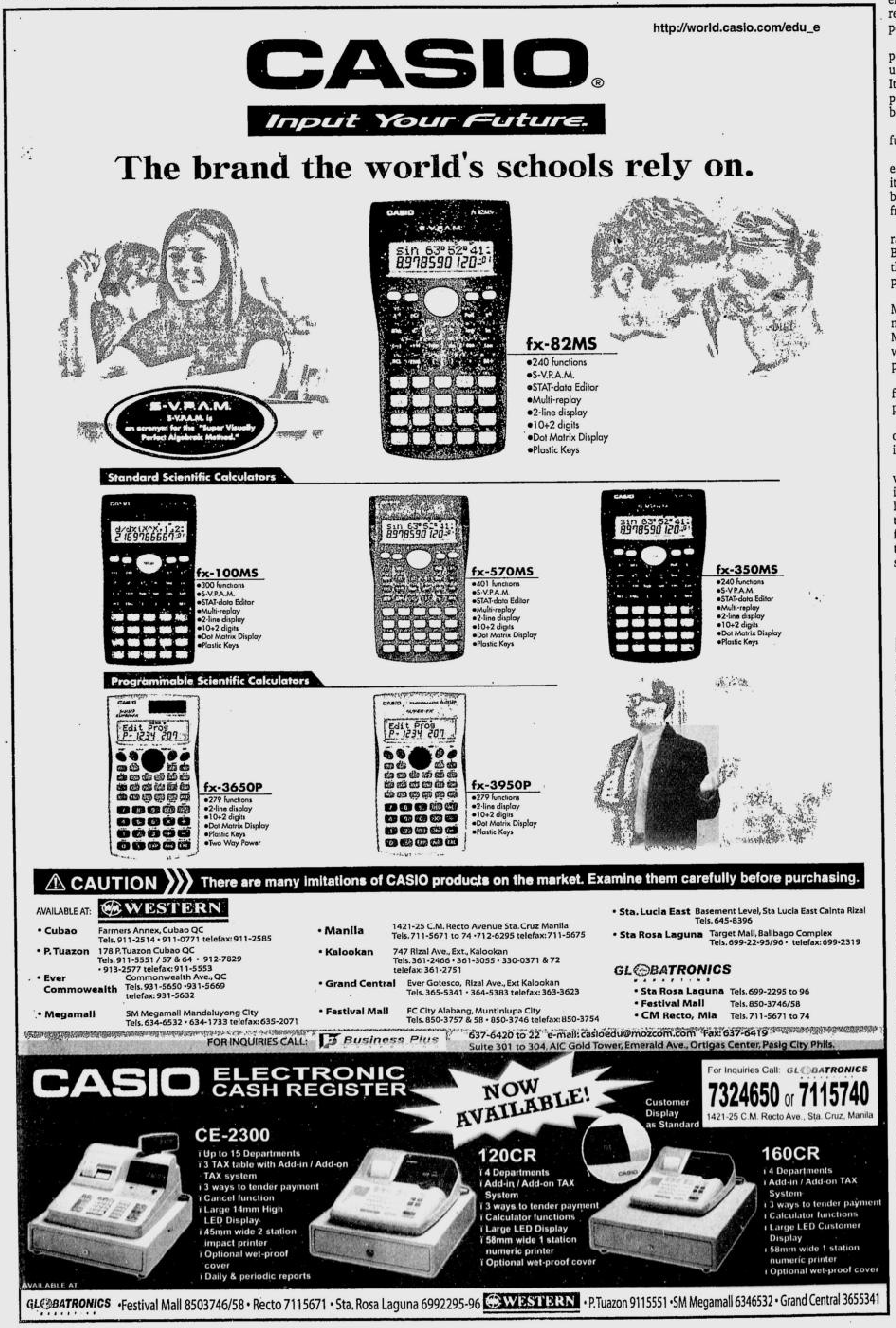
The magazine noted that HSBC was the "first arranger of a true peso-denominated corporate bond offering in November 1999 when it launched a fixed-rate corporate note facility for PLDT, providing a template for subsequent issuers in the local bond market."

DSAP's new member

GANO Excel (Phils) Inc., a company that sells food supplements and personal care products based on the reishi mushroom variety, was recently accepted as member of the Direct Selling Association of the Philippines, the umbrella group of accredited direct-selling companies in the country.

To become a DSAP member, Gano Excel underwent an 8-way test to determine its legitimacy as a multi-level marketing operator.

The government has tied up with DSAP in an effort to weed out bogus multi-level marketing firms who are only out to dupe unsuspecting Filipinos.



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Home-less Sky, Sky-less Home

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE MARRIAGE of convenience between the Lopezes' Sky Cable and PLDT's Home Cable is being buffeted by systemic distortions, threatening to break the shaky alliance apart.

According to the grapevine, PLDT president Manuel V. Pangilinan has rejected the latest proposal from Eugenio "Gabby" Lopez III that ABS-CBN lend a short-term dollar-denominated loan to Home Cable for the joint venture's working capital, with Home Cable shares being pledged as collateral.

MVP had initially thought there was a typographical error, a missing decimal point, in the loan proposal when he first saw that Sky was asking for a "25%" interest for the dollar loan. After checking, it turned out that the interest rate for the proposed loan indeed was 25 percent, not 2.5 percent as MVP had hoped for, according to the industry grapevine.

Prior to that, MVP had also turned down an offer from Sky Cable to pump in, instead of cash, shares of Bayantel, the heavily indebted landline telephone unit also of the Lopezes, for the capital call of the Sky-Home venture.

Incidentally, the deadline for the increased capitalization is this month, and the smart money is betting on the two partners calling it quits and going back to their own separate ways.

TonyBoy as shopkeeper

PEOPLE associate Antonio "TonyBoy" Cojuangco with PLDT and Gretchen Barretto.

What is not well known is that the telecom tycoon has apparently plunged full-time into the department store/supermarket business.

TonyBoy has for quite sometime now been the chair and president of The Landmark Corp., the corporate owner of the popular department store and supermarket in the Ayala Center.

This little tidbit may be gleaned from, of all places, in the definitive information statements being issued to shareholders by publicly listed Kuok Philippine Properties Inc. as part of its annual reportorial compliance with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

TonyBoy is a director of KPPI, as well as Alfredo Ramos of the National Bookstore fame. (Ramos, incidentally, is also president of Crossings department store in Ortigas.)

Now you know where TonyBoy gets those off-the-rack barong Tagalogs that he wears to office everyday.

Clear air discount

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy and the Development Bank of the Philippines are offering a "soft" loan-and-subsidized fuel package to entice bus companies to switch to the cleaner compressed natural gas instead of diesel as fuel for their engines.

So far, only Roberto Torres of RRCG has taken the plunge, and has agreed to avail himself of 20 CNG-powered buses from Daewoo. RRCG's CNG-powered buses, all air-conditioned and therefore free to set market-driven fare rates, will ply the Manila-Batangas route.

The 10-year loan carries a 9.5- percent interest; in addition, RRCG is assured of Malampaya-sourced CNG that is priced P6-P7/liter cheaper than diesel, said Energy Undersecretary JV Emmanuel de Dios.

Because of the clean air discount, Philtranco and Nissan rent-a-car are also seriously considering availing themselves of the package, he added.

Carat's lesser shine

CARAT, the world's largest independent media buying agency, has lately undergone ownership change locally, with its Philippine partners led by Marc Roces divesting their stake in favor of Carat's handpicked allies led by ex-Asiaweek advertising manager Jocelyn Domingo, Luis Nuñez of Far East Media, and retired Ayala PR Danilo Gozo.

Unfortunately, with the ownership change, the local clients of Carat like Destileria Limtuaco, Parfetti Van Melle, and Heno de Pravia have decided to abandon ship as well, inviting other media agencies to handle their respective accounts.

Out of the about P150 million a year in local billings, Carat only counts P15 million from Adidas and another P25 million from Philips as aligned accounts, meaning Carat got hold of the local placements because Carat's mother agency in London handles the worldwide media accounts for the two multinational clients.

Carat has a local creative agency partner, Catalytx, which counts on Yakult, Gardenia bakery, and Caha de Oro as main clients. It is not immediately clear if the new local Carat partners will have the same chemistry as the Roces group had with Catalytx.

Heard through the grapevine

THE AYALAS and their Singaporean partners are preparing a suit against the Department of Budget and Management and Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin over the conduct of a P260-million bidding for the DBM's computerized procurement system, a bidding which the Ayala consortium narrowly lost.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Globe Telecom to issue P2.5B in retail bonds

From page B3

company's revenue was largely denominated in peso and with a dollar issue, the cost of hedging made it expensive.

Banks' double-your-money-in-five years promotions would also mature late this year or early next year, paving the way for an increase in the liquidity of the financial system. The proposed Globe notes would be a good alternative investment outlet for bank clients.

At the same time, many banks cannot lend any more to Globe, part of the Ayala group of companies, without exceeding single borrower's limits.

The planned issuance of the retail notes would be the first such borrowing for Globe and one of the larger types of offerings in the market so far.

Meanwhile, ING Securities' regional telecom analyst Doris Pardo has recommended a buy on Globe as well as the latter's competitor, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. Pardo said Globe's profit this year could reach P10.72 billion, increasing to P12.62 billion next year. Last year, Globe posted a profit of P6.84 billion.

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Smart focuses expansion on untapped rural markets

By Abigail L. Ho

CELLULAR giant Smart Communications Inc. will be focusing its expansion efforts on areas outside Metro Manila as its wide subscriber base gives it more leeway to go down to the lower income brackets while maintaining healthy revenue levels.

Manuel V. Pangilinan, president and chief executive of Smart parent firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., said growth would now be coming from the provinces as Metro Manila already had a very high concentration of mobile phone subscribers.

"With Smart's continuing extended coverage, growth has shifted to the provinces now. With subscriber base now at 17 million for the industry, we're now going deeper and deeper into the other income segments," he said.

PANGILINAN

Smart has also launched a prepaid reloading service that not only aims to arrest its churn, or total disconnections, but also seeks to make the Smart brand present in as many areas in the country as possible.

Capitalizing on the Filipinos' "tingi" or piecemeal mentality, Smart has launched the new Buddy Load service that offers over-the-air reloads for as low as P30.

Pangilinan said the Buddy Load service is just selling cellular phone credits through "channels" like *sari-sari* stores and other mom-and-pop enterprises present in almost every Filipino community nationwide.

"The coverage of the mass market is there. There are around 500,000 sari-sari stores nationwide. (The Smart Buddy Load) should be as ubiquitous as Coke or San Miguel," he said.

In an earlier interview, Pangilinan said the projected 25-percent cellular penetration rate would likely be hit by year's end, based on the subscription trends during the past five months.

While most analysts said the 25-percent penetration rate would already be the "brick wall" or the saturation point for cellular, he said this could be stretched further as the Filipinos' appetite for mobile phones remained quite good.

Also, while net subscriber additions could possibly dwindle as the industry neared its saturation point, he said Smart could continue posting healthy revenues if it continued on its good management path.

"Most well managed cellular companies still grow their revenues despite declining net subscriber additions. The contention of Smart is that as usage continues to grow, revenues will grow even though (average revenue per unit) may go down," he said.

Ayala Land posts brisk sales in 2nd quarter

By Elena R. Torrijos

AYALA Land Inc., the property arm of the Ayala family, has reported strong sales in the second quarter of this year on the back of brisk take-up of residential projects.

In a research report, ING Securities senior analyst for the Philippines Gilbert Lopez said that ALI officials disclosed in a meeting that the first tower of the property developer's Columns, a lower-end residential high-rise development in Makati, had nearly sold out its 284 units.

Meanwhile, Westgrove, a high-end residential subdivision south of Metro Manila, has sold a cumulative 84 percent of 1,207 lots.

Other projects of ALI had the following take-up rates as of end-May: Greenfields, 69 percent; Ferndale, 77 percent; Verdana, 95 percent; Montgomery, 80 percent; One Legazpi, 87 percent, and Hillsides, 96 percent.

Greenfields is a high-end leisure project, Ferndale and Verdana are mid-end house and lots, Montgomery is a townhouse project, One Legazpi is a mid-end condominium while Hillsides is also a high-end residential development.

Lopez noted that ALI continued to plan the launch of several new projects to sustain sales momentum.

The company is set to launch Residences, a high-rise condominium in the Makati central business district targeting the high-end market.

Over the next few months, the property firm also expects to launch its residential land project in Magallanes and an inner city project by low-cost housing unit Laguna Properties.

Lopez said that meetings with other developers confirmed that growth in the property sector was more broad-based this year as seen by strong sales experienced likewise by Megaworld Corp. of businessman Andrew Tan and Filinvest Land Inc. of the Gotianun family.

"ALI continues to remain our top buy among property companies due to its robust sales growth, driven by the low interest rate environment. Affordability levels for property purchases have never been better, which should keep property demand strong," Lopez said.

"The strong momentum should be maintained with the launch of several new projects catering to various niches," Lopez said.

Last year, ALI posted a profit of P2.52 billion. Lopez has projected that the company's profit this year would rise to P2.77 billion and to P3.13 billion next year.

Banks remain reluctant to lend to volatile real estate sector

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE banks are still cautious in lending to the volatile real estate sector, whose reversal after years of boom was deemed as the culprit behind the Asian currency turmoil that erupted in 1997.

As of end-March this year, commercial banks' exposure to the real estate industry—by both bank proper and trust department—declined by 4.1 percent from a year ago to P180.2 billion, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

Compared to the previous quarter, however, the exposure increased by a marginal 0.5 percent.

The real estate exposure as of the first quarter accounted for 10.5 percent of the sector's total loans, up by 0.1 percentage point from last quarter's ratio of 10.4 percent but down by 0.6 percentage point from last year's 11.1 percent.

"There was no change in the quality of real estate loans, as past-due level increased to P46.5 billion from P43.1 billion last quarter. However, this was still lower than last year's P51.4 billion," the BSP said.

"Thus, past-due ratio rose to 25.8 percent from last quarter's 24.1 percent but down from last year's 27.3 percent," it added.

As a ratio of total outstanding loans, past-due real estate loans stood at 2.7 percent, lower than the 3-percent ratio a year ago.

Aside from loans, industry exposure to the real estate industry included investments in commercial papers and in the equities of real estate companies.

Based on the BSP's data, investments in CPs slightly increased to P2.4 billion from P2.3 billion in the previous quarter but still stood lower than the year-ago level of P4.1 billion.

Banks' equity investments, on the other hand, rose further to P9.1 billion during the first quarter of this year compared to P8.3 billion in the previous quarter and P7.9 billion from the same quarter last year.

"The overall credit and equity exposures to the real estate industry aggregated P191.7 billion or 11.2 percent of total outstanding loans, breaking the declining trend (from P189.9 billion last quarter and P199.8 billion a year ago) as well as in ratio to total outstanding loans (from 11.1 percent last quarter and 11.8 percent a year ago)," the BSP said.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 12, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.15	4.2	4.15	4.2	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	15.75	16.25	15.75	16.25	214,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	44.5	46.5	44.5	46.5	1,569,100
China Banking Corp.	710	710	710	710	400
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	32	33	32	33	744,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30	30	29	30	846,700
Philippine National Bank	23	23.5	23	23	761,600
Phil. Savings Bank	28	28	28	28	11,000
Security Bank Corp.	11.75	12	11.75	12	322,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.75	48,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	817,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	1,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1520	1535	1520	1535	1,920
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1115	1115	1110	1110	1,120
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16	16.5	16	16.25	30,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.73	0.77	0.72	0.75	15,690,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	620	620	615	620	37,200
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.042	0.042	5,300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.022	0.022	0.02	0.02	9,100,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	150,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.37	0.38	0.36	0.37	6,870,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	495	495	490	492.5	128,990
Ivantage Corp.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.45	2,070,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	51,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	7.7	8.2	7.7	8.2	1,280,000
Manila Electric Co. B	11.75	12.75	11.75	12.75	3,470,500
Petron Corp.	1.84	1.92	1.84	1.86	11,286,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.58	1.6	1,617,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.7	1,876,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.38	420,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	1,360,000
Sanitary Wares Mfg. Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	30,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	1,640,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29	29	29	29	17,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	406,500
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	130,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54.5	55	54	54.5	163,700
San Miguel Corp. B	64	64	62.5	64	259,900
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	20,000
Ayala Corp.	4.7	4.95	4.7	4.9	20,355,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.3	2.34	2.3	2.32	211,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	600
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.027	0.026	0.026	2,800,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.6	0.63	0.6	0.63	25,820,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	10,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.7	1.64	1.7	70,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.43	0.47	0.43	0.45	33,880,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	100,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	3,200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.24	0.24	1,860,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.12	1.2	1.12	1.2	368,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	9.2	10	9.2	9.8	4,479,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.095	0.1	0.095	0.1	1,000,000
Ionics Inc.	0.72	0.8	0.72	0.75	1,450,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.52	1.54	1.5	1.54	1,443,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	20,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.74	0.76	0.74	0.75	2,700,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.28	0.31	0.28	0.31	140,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.205	0.21	0.2	0.205	5,260,000
Music Corp.	0.33	0.36	0.33	0.36	5,850,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	2	2	2	2	2,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	600,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.25	0.28	0.25	0.25	210,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	15,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.65	0.67	0.53	0.53	190,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.66	1.7	1.66	1.7	29,000
Pryce Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	50,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15.75	15.75	15.75	15.75	15,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.5	6,500,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	100,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	40,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	150,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.38	0.42	0.38	0.39	800,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4	4	4	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	16	17	16	16.5	649,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	3,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.002	0.0024	0.002	0.0024	7,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	5	5	5	5	405,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.7	9,929,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	500,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.135	0.15	0.135	0.15	1,830,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.195	0.205	0.195	0.195	9,020,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	50,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.95	1	0.95	0.97	31,130,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.055	0.0775	0.055	0.06	6,700,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.165	0.165	540,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	70,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	26,207,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	10,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	200,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.0038	0.004	56,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	300,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0026	0.0028	0.0026	0.0028	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	4,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000
Pacifica	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	2,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.022	0.024	0.022	0.024	2,000,000

CURRENCIES

June 12, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.851064	1.000000	53.518000
Japan	Yen	0.007230	0.008495	0.454600
United Kingdom	Pound	1.418894	1.667200	89.225200
Hongkong	Dollar	0.109132	0.128230	6.862600
Switzerland	Franc	0.650213	0.764000	40.887800
Canada	Dollar	0.629951	0.740192	39.613600
Singapore	Dollar	0.491008	0.576934	30.876400
Australia	Dollar	0.563992	0.662691	35.465900
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.269443	2.666596	142.710900
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.226938	0.266652	14.270700
Brunei	Dollar	0.489596	0.575275	30.787600
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000122	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.020385	0.023952	1.281900
UAE	Dirham	0.231727	0.272279	14.571800
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.175000	62.883700
Argentina	Peso	0.302870	0.355872	19.045600
Brazil	Real	0.296125	0.347947	18.621400
Denmark	Kroner	0.134620	0.158178	8.465400
India	Rupee	0.018260	0.021455	1.148200
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.223994	0.263193	14.085600
Mexico	New Peso	0.080586	0.094688	5.067500
New Zealand	Dollar	0.491235	0.577201	30.890600
Norway	Kroner	0.121706	0.143004	7.653300
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014750	0.017331	0.927500
South Africa	Rand	0.107356	0.126143	6.750900
Korea	Won	0.000712	0.000837	0.044800
Sweden	Kroner	0.109818	0.129036	6.905700
Syria	Pound	0.020264	0.023810	1.274300
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024597	0.028902	1.546800
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000534	0.000627	0.033600

Rally seen to continue

From page B1

confidence, analysts noted.

Since the end of May, the main composite index has risen by almost 15 percent.

"There's a lot of optimism that positive developments are about to happen in the economy and the stock market. We are quietly concerned about such optimism when not much has really happened yet. We'd be very bullish if the market was cheap, but it isn't," Jovis Vistan of AB Capital Securities said.

"While we believe that this rally may still continue, it is to be very speculative. We believe that there is a chance that it will end in exhaustion next month," Vistan said.

He noted rating agency Fitch's downgrade of Philippine credit and expressed doubts that the fiscal situation was really improving. Moreover, he pointed out that the 2004 presidential elections would bring in more uncertainties.

BPI Securities, through its BPI-Trade website, said that daily technical movement indicated that the stock market was overbought. However, the stock brokerage said the market could still go higher before correcting again.

The brokerage house said that the market's break through the 1,167 resistance level made a test of the 1,200 resistance level certain.

"If the market can move past the 1,200 resistance, then the market is poised to test the 1,300 level," BPI Securities said.

On a longer term view, ING Securities analyst Gilbert Lopez said the Phisix could reach 1,350 in the next 12 months or significantly higher than his earlier forecast of 1,010 given positive macroeconomic developments and lower interest rates that should lead to broader profit recovery.

Vistan advised investors to take advantage of pockets of strength in the market, particularly banking and property stocks that do well in low-interest environments. *Elena R. Torrijos*

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CALATAGAN "A"	80K	RIVIERA "A"	Call now	CC @ TAG	350K
CELEB (INDIV)	200K	S WOODS "B"	600K	CLUB FILIPINO	140K
CELEB (CORP)	Call now	STA. ELENA "A"	1.4M	FOREST HILLS "A"	150K
FOREST HILLS "A"	200K	SUBIC BAY YACHT	Call now	MLA POLO	2.1M
MLA POLO	2.45M	TAG HLANDS	Call now	MKTI SPORTS "A"	250K
MIMOSA (CORP)	270K	TAG MIDLANDS	750K	VALLEY GOLF	270K

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EAGLE RIDGE "A"	10,000	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	30,000
MLA SOUTHWOODS	45,000	WACK WACK	[illegible]

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Alabang A/B	1.3M/1.3M	Manila Southwoods A/B	470T/560	Tagaytay Highland [illegible]	360/190
Camp John Hay Golf	220,000	Mimosa	120T	Tagaytay Midlands	100
Canyon Woods	125,000	Mt. Malarayat "A"	270T	Valle Verde CC	140
Eagle Ridge A/B/C	350/340/400	Riviera A	130T	Wack Wack	6.325M
Fontana D	50,000	Royale Tagaytay	70T		
Forest Hill A/B/C	193/228/240	Sherwood	50T		
BUYING		Eagle Ridge A	250T	Orchard "A"	170T
Baguio Country Club	Please call	Eastridge	70T	Quezon City Sports	175T
Canlubang Golf	450,000	Manila Golf Indv./Corp	10.2M/11M	Sta. Elena A/B	Please call
Capitol Hills	135,000	Manila Polo	2,250,000	Valley Golf	270
Celebrity	175T	Manila Southwoods A/B	450/500		
Club Filipino	110T	Mimosa Corp	280T		

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A	1,270,000	-
Baguio Country Club	730,000	580,000
Camp John Hay	220,000	Pls. Call
Canyon Woods	160,000	Pls. Call
Capitol Hills	-	100,000
Calatagan Golf Club A/B**	70,000/Pls. Call	-
Celebrity Sports Club	180,000	150,000
Club Filipino	-	140,000
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	270,000/450,000**	220,000
Eastridge A	-	65,000
Evercrest	100,000	-
Fontana D/C*/A**	70,000/140,000*/230,000**	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	220,000/230,000*/250,000**	175,000
Manila Golf Ind./Corp.*	12,000,000*	-
Manila Polo	2,500,000	2,000,000
Makati Sports Club A/B*	-	210,000
Manila Yacht Club	550,000	-
Manila Southwoods A/B*	540,000/600,000*	450,000
Metropolitan Club	100,000	90,000
Mimosa Golf Ind./Corp.*	-	95,000/280,000*
Mt. Malarayat Ind./Corp.*	270,000	-
Orchard Golf A/B*	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Phil. Columbian	70,000	-
Puerto Azul A/B	100,000/150,000*	-
Punta Fuego	500,000	400,000
Quezon City Sports Club A	220,000	-
Riviera Golf A/C*	360,000*	100,000
Royale Tagaytay A/C*	Pls. Call*	-
Sherwoods A/B*/C**	90,000/Pls. Call*	70,000**
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	-	1,400,000
Subic Bay Yacht Club (Corp.)	160,000	-
Spa & Lodge	700,000	-
Subic Golf	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	600,000	700,000
Tagaytay Country Club	-	320,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	-
Valley Golf & CC	300,000	260,000
Valle Verde (Indv.)	160,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	6,500,000	-

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BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	650K	600K
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB "A"	60K	-
CANYON WOODS	-	please call
CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	-	135K
FONTANA "D"	50K	-
FOREST HILLS "A"	-	155K
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	-	210K
MANILA GOLF CLUB (Ind.)	please call	10.2M
MANILA GOLF CLUB (Corp.)	11M	-
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.300M	-
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	600K	-
METRO CLUB		90K
MIMOSA (Ind.)	120K	-
MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB	-	30K
PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB	90K	-
ROYALE TAGAYTAY	-	please call
SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	130K	-
SHERWOOD HILLS "C"	-	please call
SPA & Lodge	-	700K
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	-	1.3M
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "B"	please call	1.4M
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	please call	-
VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	-	250K
WACK WACK GOLF CLUB	6.350M	-

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CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,200,000	1,300,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,500,000
Baguio Country Club	620,000	750,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	70,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	80,000
Camp John Hay	-	230,000
Canlubang	450,000	550,000
Canyonwoods	-	150,000
Capitol Hills	Please Call	160,000
Cebu Country Club	Please Call	-
Celebrity Sports Club	170,000	180,000
Club Filipino	100,000	150,000
Evercrest "A"	-	80,000
Forest Hills "A"	160,000	200,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	200,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	230,000	300,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,100,000	10,600,000
Manila Polo	-	2,400,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	Please Call	500,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	600,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	500,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	90,000	135,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	120,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	300,000
Montemar (Individual)	40,000	-
Montemar (Corporate)	70,000	-
Mt. Malarayat (Individual)	-	270,000
Mt. Malarayat (Corporate)	-	500,000
Puerto Azul	-	100,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	200,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Royale Tagaytay "A"	-	Please Call
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	90,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	180,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	200,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,250,000	1,500,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	260,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	360,000	430,000
Tagaytay Highlands	700,000	800,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	750,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	165,000
Valley Golf	280,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,300,000	6,600,000

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Japan seen cutting Kennedy Round II grant to RP

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE JAPANESE government is expected to cut drastically its yearly financial grant to the Philippines to only 40 million yen, or 10 percent of the country's previous allocation of 400 million yen.

Sources from the Department of Agriculture said on Thursday that this was the "best deal" the country could get considering the Japanese government's earlier plan to drop the Philippines from its list of grant recipients.

"They (Japanese government) want to give us only 10 percent of our previous annual allocation. However, we are still trying to haggle for more before the memorandum is signed," the source said.

Japan's outgoing First Secretary for Agriculture Satoshi Ueno confirmed in an earlier interview that his government would cut its financial grants earmarked for the Philippines.

The yearly grant from the Japanese government is known as the Kennedy Round II (KRII) or the RP-Japan Increased Food Production Program. KRII grants, mostly in the form of fertilizers, are "monetized" and used to bankroll agriculture projects.

The KRII grant's utilization in the previous year came under fire, however, as certain sectors questioned the grant's use, beneficiaries, and projects financed.

At present, there is a pending petition from the Department of Agriculture for the National Economic and Development Authority's Investment Coordinating Committee (ICC) to release some P1.77 billion of the grant for certain agriculture projects.

The amount represents the accumulated funds from the 21st to the 25th grant packages given to the Philippines.

DA sources said the grants acquired from years 1997 to 2001 remained untapped due to bureaucratic issues.

Sources said the money was being held in abeyance because the DA and the Neda have yet to resolve issues left by former secretaries Edgardo Angara of agriculture and Felipe Medalla of Neda.

The two former secretaries under the Estrada administration, had a verbal agreement that the "monetization" of KRII proceeds would be handled solely by the DA's attached agency, the National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC).

S&P downgrades ratings on Casecnan debt notes

LONDON—Standard & Poor's Ratings Services said it had lowered its issue rating on CE Casecnan Water and Energy Co. Inc.'s (Casecnan) $296.5 million senior secured notes to 'B+' from 'BB.' The outlook on the rating is negative.

The rating action reflects the company's tight liquidity position and concerns about the increased risks of arbitration of the off-take contract with the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), its major customer.

Casecnan has recently experienced delays in receiving payments from the NIA. Although Casecnan eventually received payment for the outstanding invoice, amounting to about $7.2 million, the company did not obtain an explanation as to why it was delayed. An added uncertainty is NIA's claim that Casecnan's power contract is contrary to Philippine law and public policy.

NIA has requested the arbitral tribunal to declare the project agreement void, or to remedy the alleged defects in its terms.

The uncertainty over the strength of this agreement is a concern.

Standard & Poor's is also concerned about Casecnan's tight liquidity position. The company is unable to fund its debt service reserve. Casecnan's debt service coverage ratio has remained at about 1x since the company began operations, which is significantly less than originally projected.

Casecnan's cash levels amount to about $0.5 million, compared with debt due November 2003 totaling about $37 million.

Casecnan, a subsidiary of MidAmerican Energy Holdings Co., operates a 150-megawatt hydroelectric power project in the Philippines. *Reuters*

Lopez answers issues vs Meralco

FIRST Philippine Holdings Corp. chair Oscar Lopez, the head of the Lopez Group, finally broke his silence and addressed issues hurled specifically against the Lopez's management of Manila Electric Co.

During the 41st stockholders meeting of FPHC, Lopez said Meralco for the past 40 years had "actually kept a very tight rein on the components of the power rate within its control," refuting the charge that Meralco was "rapacious."

He said decisions and the reversal of decisions by regulators like the Energy Regulatory Board (now Commission) and by the Supreme Court were not within Meralco's control.

Meralco's contract to buy power from the Santa Rita and San Lorenzo gas-powered plants, Lopez said, could never have been a "sweetheart deal" because Meralco was precisely called upon, in 1994, by two energy secretaries, first by Delfin Lazaro and then by Francisco Viray, to provide "the market" 1,500 megawatts of power from natural gas-fired plants.

These plants, fueled by natural gas coming from the Camago-Malampaya field project in Palawan, would be key to making viable the $4.8-billion project by Occidental Petroleum and Shell.

"Meralco's participation as a buyer of the gas was integral and essential component of the development of Malampaya, without which our country's first commercial natural gas field would not have been viable," he stressed.

Also, the FPHC head dismissed as absurd and ludicrous allegations that the Lopezes "have milked" Meralco. He said that was not possible because Meralco was being scrutinized by the regulators, various interest and consumer groups, the Securities and Exchange Commission, a watchdog committee and Meralco directors representing the equity held by government agencies."

On the issue of overcharging, he explained that Meralco's basic distribution charge today amounted to 82 centavos. Since 1991, the utility firm "has effectively been allowed to increase its rate by only 1.7 centavos.

Meralco had sought an additional 30-centavo increase, equivalent to a 28 percent increase in its basic distribution charge," he said.

Compare that, he said, with the hefty rate increases in the cost of other modern-day conveniences: the monthly cost of telephone lines rose by 145 percent and public utility bus tariffs by 126 percent.

AEV set to vie for Napocor assets

THE ABOITIZ group is set to bid for the the generation assets of National Power Corp. in line with the repositioning of its Aboitiz Power Corp.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, publicly listed Aboitiz Equity Ventures, the flagship holding company of the Cebu-based Aboitiz family, said the board of APC, a wholly owned unit, had voted to reposition the company from a power generating, distribution and management business into a purely generation company.

"With APC being a purely generation company, it will be easier for strategic partners to infuse additional financial resources and provide APC with technical expertise to bid for generation assets up for privatization," AEV chief operating officer Erramon I. Aboitiz said.

The repositioning of APC was also timely, Aboitiz said, because APC's unrestricted retained earnings of over P3 billion as of 30 April 2003 exceeded its paid-in capital, where the excess was subject to improperly accumulated earnings tax unless paid out.

AEV also said the repositioning move was not only in light of opportunities to invest and participate in NPC's privatization but also given the impending power supply shortage in various regions in the country.

Napocor's generation assets in strategic location are supposed to be privatized through the spin-off of its main generation. *Elena R. Torrijos*

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Venue: Grand Ballroom, Hotel Intercon, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Philippines

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  - *The challenges in providing efficient backup & recovery for desktops and servers*
- Delivering Reliable Backup and Recovery for Distributed Environments
  - *Protection requirements in various platforms - Windows NT/2000, Windows 2003, NetWare & and Linux*
  - *Managing databases and messaging applications in your backup & recovery process*
  - *Performing Disaster Recovery*
- Supercharging Your Backup Performance Through
  - *Dedicated Backup Networks*
  - *NDMP-based solutions*
  - *Disk-based backups*
  - *High performance SANs*
  - *Zero impact serverless backups*
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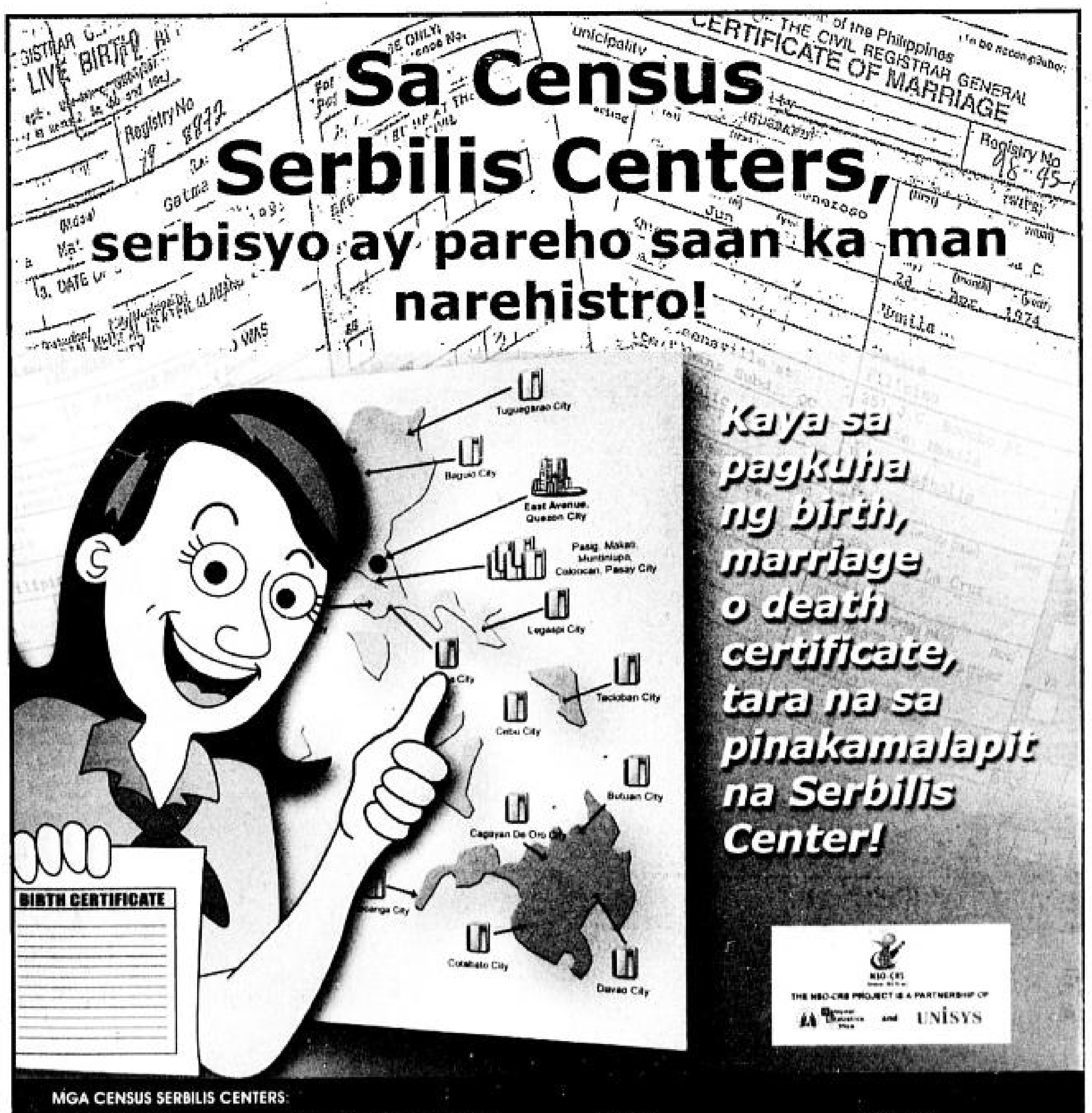

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Benpres increases stake in Bayantel

By Elena R. Torrijos

BENPRES Holdings Corp., the holding company of the Lopez group, is increasing its stake in Bayan Telecommunication Holdings Inc. from 47 percent to 66 percent by acquiring 21.75 million of the shares held by Verizon Communications Inc., a partner in the phone company.

Benpres said it had reached an agreement with Verizon for the purchase of the said shares equivalent to a 19.4-percent stake in Bayantel for "a nominal amount."

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, BHC corporate secretary Enrique Quiason said another existing stockholder of Bayantel had exercised its right of first refusal to purchase 593,963 common shares from those offered by Verizon.

In a stockholders' meeting last week, BHC officials explained that the acquisition of the 19.4-percent stake in BTHI from Verizon would allow the holding company to remove the potential realization of a contingent liability.

Earlier, BHC said it wanted to sell out its stake in Bayantel once the restructuring of the phone firm's debts were finalized.

Benpres director and treasurer Eugenio Lopez III earlier said in response to a stockholder's query that: "BTHI (Bayantel) is not included among our core assets. We are prepared to entertain any offer at any point in time."

Bayantel, a cash-strapped subsidiary of BHTC, reported an increase in its losses to P5.4 billion last year from P5.3 billion in 2001 as it continued to work out a restructuring agreement with creditors.

Postponement of RP-S. Korea air rights talks questioned

By Abigail L. Ho

THE CEBU Visitors and Convention Bureau (CVCB) is questioning the postponement of the country's air talks with South Korea saying the move would be a a hurdle to the promotion of Cebu as a top tourist destination in Asia.

In a letter to Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, CVCB chair Patrick Gregorio said the postponement of the talks for the fourth quarter of the year would be a deterrent to the growth of tourism in Cebu.

"Since the Cebu Visitors and Convention Bureau is tasked to promote Cebu as a premiere convention and events destination in the Philippines, we find this development very disturbing. This will hamper the objectives of CVCB to bring more tourists to Cebu, particularly from Asian countries," he said.

Air talks with South Korea for additional entitlements on the Seoul-Manila route had been slated for June 18 but was pushed back to the fourth quarter due to the lingering effects of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak on the aviation industry.

"The reason cited was that the traffic right now, because of the current problem of SARS and security, requires that the two countries review their proposals. The talks have been moved to the fourth quarter of this year. We will wait until the situation normalizes," a well placed government source said.

The Seoul-Manila route remains one of the most profitable for local airlines as many Korean tourists still come here despite perceived security threats and the SARS scare.

Right now, the Korean and Philippine governments have 17 weekly frequencies each.

Should the talks push through, the source said the Philippine air panel would be pushing for the conversion of its current allocation arrangement to seats instead of flight frequencies.

He explained that under the current set-up, local carriers were at a disadvantage to their Korean counterparts, which had bigger aircraft.

This meant that Korean flag carriers can carry more passengers using the same number of weekly flight frequencies as its Philippine counterparts.

"We want them to allow us to use seats as basis. We would like to have flexibility," the source said.

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Retirement is another top priority. According to the Office of Statistics, 85% of Filipinos have not saved for retirement, 11% have saved a little, and only 4% are well-prepared for retirement. "Priority Choice helps customers prioritize, then achieve, their financial goals," said Mr. Plaxton.

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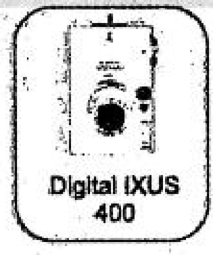

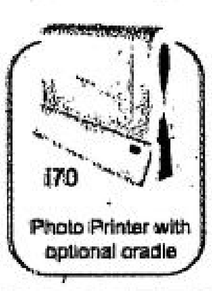

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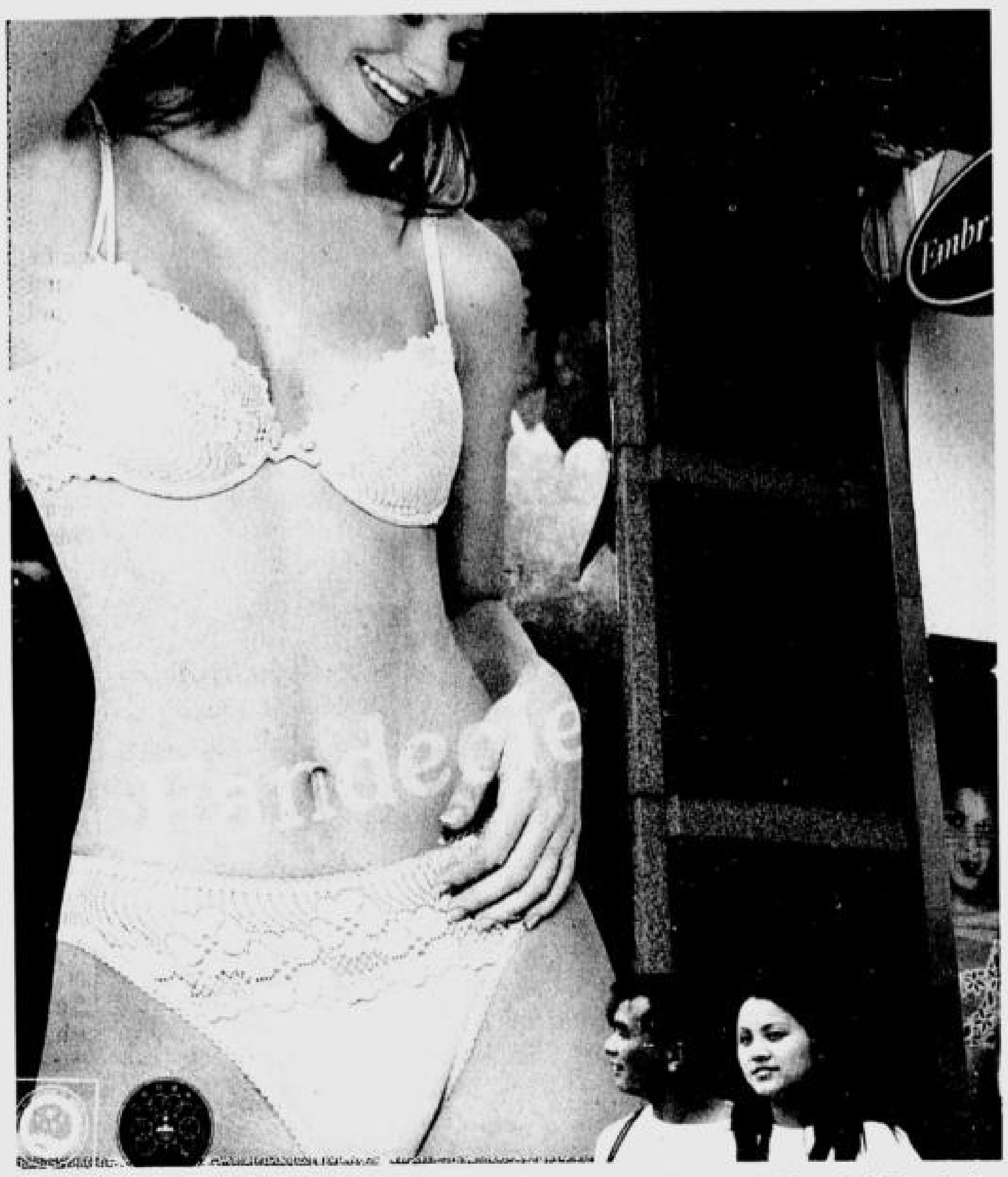

A CHINESE couple walks past an advertisement for women's underwear in Shanghai. The city is rediscovering its uninhibited past after more than a decade of growth and liberalization. REUTERS

Euphoria evaporates in US, deflation feared

WASHINGTON— Post Iraq war euphoria evaporated in the United States as the sluggish no-jobs recovery failed to gather speed, data showed Friday, stoking speculation of an interest rate cut.

A closely watched barometer of consumer sentiment drawn up by the University of Michigan unexpectedly declined to 87.2 points in early June from 92.1 in late May.

Confidence—critical because it can sway the major economic engine of US consumer spending—buckled in the face of a weak jobs market, economists said.

A key element of the Michigan barometer, the expectations index, fell to 84.2 points from 93.2.

"Now we are seeing for the first time that the fact that we have not had any major bounce since the end of the war is raising some questions in people's minds," said Naroff Economic Advisers president Joel Naroff.

Wall Street's Dow Jones industrials average of 30 top stocks fell 79.43 points, or 0.86 percent, to close at 9,117.12.

News of crumbling confidence coincided with data showing tepid US and global economies lowering demand for both imports and exports in April, along with steady wholesale prices.

The US trade gap shrank 2 percent to $42.03 billion in April from March, with imports trimmed by a slump in crude oil prices and exports drying up as foreign markets stagnated.

Imports sank $2.68 billion or 2.1 percent to $123.03 billion in April. Exports fell $1.84 billion or 2.2 percent to $81 billion.

"While the trade deficit remains high, the depreciation of the dollar should help, but it can take a year or two," said Manufacturers Alliance economist Cliff Waldman.

US producer prices, a measure of wholesale inflation, fell 0.3 percent in May when compared to April, government figures showed. Stripping out food and energy, core prices were up 0.1 percent.

"The longer the economy stagnates, the bigger the risk of deflation," warned BMO Financial Group senior economist Sal Guatieri.

A slew of data this week had already indicated the US economy was sleepy and in need of a jolt from the Federal Reserve in the form of lower interest rates, analysts said.

"The unwinding of war-related concerns appears to have provided some lift to business and consumer confidence, but most reports suggested that the effect has not been dramatic," the survey said.

The lackluster economic figures pointed to an interest rate cut, particularly in the light of Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan's concerns about the "remote" threat of deflation, Guatieri said.

Federal Reserve policymakers meet June 24-25 to discuss their target for the federal funds rate, which already lies at a 42-year low of 1.25 percent after 12 cuts since January 2001.

Guatieri said he expected the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point.

"The key risk going forward is the weakness in labor markets and a reluctance of businesses to hire. Hopefully, it doesn't translate into further erosion of consumer confidence," he said.

The US unemployment rate rose to a nine-year high of 6.1 percent in May from 6.0 percent the previous month as businesses axed 17,000 jobs.

The economy would likely expand at an annualized rate of 1.7 percent in the second quarter of this year, little changed from growth of 1.4 percent in the last quarter of 2002 and 1.9 percent in the first quarter of 2003, Guatieri predicted. *AFP*

Wall St. in for rough week

NEW YORK—Warnings about corporate earnings may rain down on Wall Street this week, along with economic reports that could strengthen market expectations the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates soon.

To cope, stocks may meander a bit or slip.

Investors will pick apart reports on the May Consumer Price Index, a barometer of inflation at the retail level, plus housing starts and industrial production.

The market will search for clues on the economy's health in the first-quarter current account deficit, June regional manufacturing and May leading US economic indicators.

Earnings likely to grab attention include: chipmaker Micron Technology Inc., retailer Circuit City Stores Inc. and investment bank Morgan Stanley.

But the Street could be swayed by major confessions that financial results will disappoint, especially after such dour news from heavy hitters like Nokia Corp., Texas Instruments Inc. and carmaker DaimlerChrysler AG.

"It's been an enormous rally," said David Dreman, chair and chief investment manager of Dreman Value Management, referring to the three-month rally that has lifted the tech-laden Nasdaq nearly 30 percent.

"We're probably out of the bear market and in a bull market, but I don't think the market will accelerate at those levels until earnings start to pick up. There's no sign of that on the horizon," added Dreman, whose firm oversees $6.8 billion.

Paul Cherney, chief real-time market analyst at S&P MarketScope, agrees with Dreman. He sees a sideways market, but believes the downside will be limited as money flows back into the market, helping to keep a floor under stocks on pullbacks.

A recent surge in volume "tells me people are coming off the sidelines and feeling more confident we've hit bottom," Cherney said. "The greater risk is not being invested, even though we're probably not going to have a huge shot up on the upside." *Reuters*

Foreign banks buy stake in US

NEW YORK—A handful of foreign central banks are amassing a huge stake in the US economy, not out of any belief that America is an attractive investment but rather as a desperate attempt to shield their countries' exports.

Data out this week showed the Federal Reserve now holds a record $936 billion for these, mostly Asian, central banks equivalent to almost 10 percent of the entire annual output of the US economy.

The bulk of this is held in Treasuries' giving these banks over 20 percent of the market for government debt.

At the moment, this suits all sides. The United States gets its spending habits funded cheaply while avoiding a potentially destabilizing plunge in the dollar.

The central banks, mostly Asian in origin, limit a rise in their currencies which could cripple their export-reliant economies, while providing American consumers with the wherewithal to keep buying their cars, computers and clothes.

But the cost of supporting the dollar is rising by the month. Holdings of US assets by all the central banks have risen around $163 billion in just the last year, with the Bank of Japan buying a record $34 billion in May alone.

Since much of the money goes into Treasuries, it has played no small part in the driving yields to 45-year lows, a point noted by Bill Gross, head of the huge PIMCO bond fund.

Speaking on CNNfn this week, Gross singled out buying from the central banks of China and Japan as a major reason for the spectacular fall in yields of recent months.

"They're not mindful of the yield they're buying, they simply want to keep their currencies down in order to be competitive," said Gross, who helps manage $323 billion in assets.

The problem, say some analysts, is that by supporting the dollar those central banks are preventing a natural correction in the US trade deficit. The shortfall has already topped 5 percent of GDP, a level associated with funding crises in the past, and shows no sign of contracting.

"You have to reckon that at some point something will have to give; that Washington will say no more, the deficit is just getting too big," said Ken Landon, senior currency strategist at Deutsche Bank. *Reuters*

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PeopleSoft sues giant Oracle to block hostile takeover bid

PALO ALTO, Calif.—PeopleSoft Inc. filed suit on Friday in a California court to block Oracle Corp.'s $5.1 billion hostile takeover bid, the latest salvo in an increasingly heated battle between the rival business software companies.

"Oracle has deliberately embarked on its unlawful campaign to injure PeopleSoft, and to cripple its ability to compete," PeopleSoft said in its lawsuit, filed in Alameda County Superior Court.

Oracle, which is standing by a $16-share, all-cash offer that is below PeopleSoft's closing stock price of $16.92, said the merger question would be decided by PeopleSoft shareholders and not by "frivolous litigation." "PeopleSoft seems to have revived its on-again, off-again litigation strategy," Oracle spokesperson Jim Finn said.

The legal maneuver comes on the heels of two complaints filed on Thursday by PeopleSoft's intended merger partner J.D. Edwards & Co., which is seeking an injunction against Oracle and $1.7 billion in damages.

"What you're seeing right now is a concerted effort by both PeopleSoft and J.D. Edwards to thwart the Oracle move," Paul Crisci, managing director of Broadview International's West Coast mergers and acquisitions office, told Reuters.

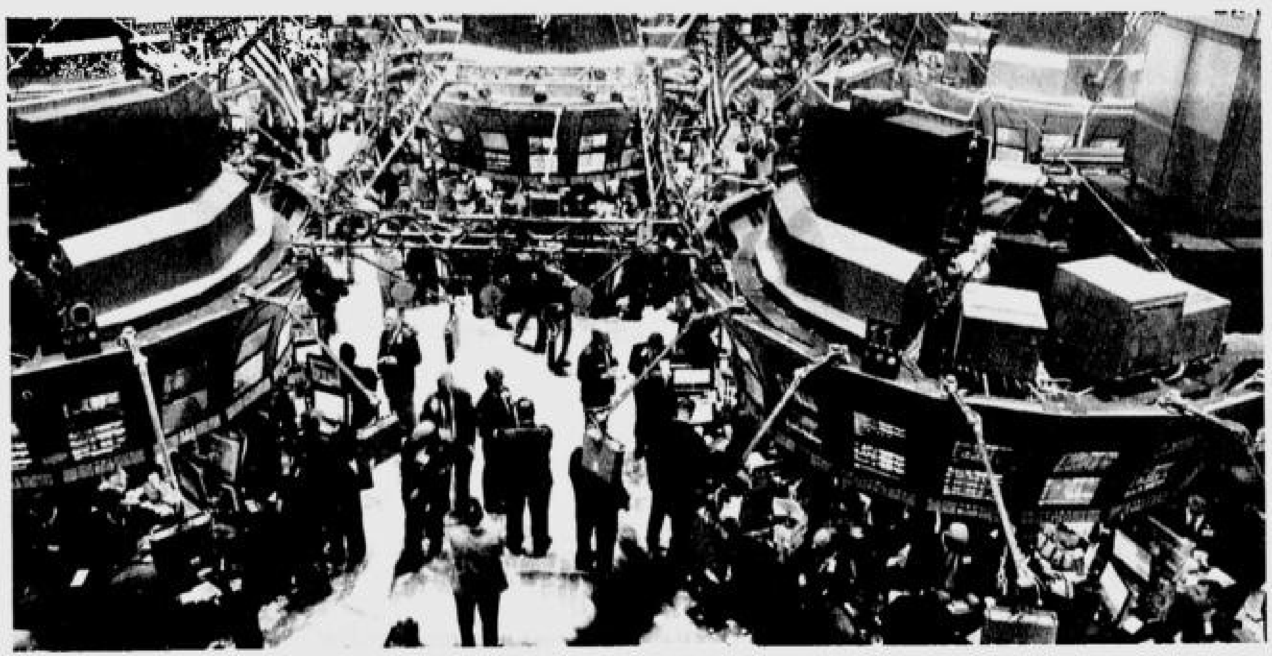
Crisci, who is not involved in the deal, said the companies were hoping to create a legal distraction to slow the momentum of Oracle, as they push ahead with their merger plans.

In its lawsuit, Pleasanton, California-based PeopleSoft alleged Oracle engaged in unfair trade practices and asked the court for unspecified damages, saying Oracle's "low-ball offer" was aimed at derailing the merger with J.D. Edwards.

PeopleSoft, which makes software that automates business functions like accounting and human resources, said Oracle was out to poach customers.

PeopleSoft has argued that Oracle's proposed takeover would require months of scrutiny from antitrust regulators since it would eliminate a competitor from the three-way race between PeopleSoft, Oracle and market leader SAP AG. *Reuters*

TOURISTS from Guangzhou, Mainland China take a picture at Golden Bauhinia Square in Hong Kong June 14. Hong Kong will host an international tourism forum in July in a bid to rebuild Hong Kong as Asia's top tourist destination after the SARS outbreak. The territory has earmarked HK$1 billion to promote the city. REUTERS



TRADERS work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 79.78 points to close at 9,116.77. AFP

Ministers commit to form trade zone

WASHINGTON—Top trade officials from 14 Western Hemisphere countries reaffirmed their commitment on Friday to craft an Americas free trade zone by 2005, a top US trade official said.

The meeting in rural Maryland of the United States, Brazil, Mexico, Canada and other regional trading partners took place as stalled world trade negotiations have cast doubt on efforts to finish the Free Trade Area of the Americas pact by that deadline.

The ministers discussed the possibility of scaling back the scope of the FTAA to increase the chance of striking a deal by January 2005, but "there was no conclusion drawn about that," the trade official said.

The proposed agreement would create the world's largest free trade zone, an estimated $13 trillion market covering 34 countries and nearly 800 million people.

Because only about one-third of the FTAA countries were represented at the Maryland meeting, no decisions could be made, the US official said.

"There was a very frank and candid discussion among the ministers about where we are now" and what might be possible to achieve by January 2005, he said.

The officials reiterated their commitment to economic integration of the entire Western Hemisphere, even while many countries in the region pursue bilateral trade deals, he said. *Reuters*

HK to forge free trade pact with China

HONG KONG—An expected free trade deal between Hong Kong and China won't violate World Trade Organization rules and will treat all Hong Kong-based businesses equally, an official said.

Responding to worries that the agreement could discriminate against foreign companies operating in Hong Kong, Hong Kong's commerce secretary, Henry Tang, said it would treat all businesses equally in keeping with the territory's laissez-faire traditions.

The agreement, which officials say should be completed this month, is intended to help lower business costs and promote bilateral trade and investment.

Tang said Friday that the pact, dubbed the Mainland/Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, will respect Hong Kong's tradition of a "level playing field" and comply with WTO regulations.

The WTO discourages differential treatment for domestic and foreign companies.

This former British colony reverted to Chinese rule in 1997 under an arrangement giving Hong Kong broad autonomy. But it remains a separate customs territory from mainland China, making it difficult for the city to take full advantage of its trade and commercial ties with the mainland.

Thousands of Hong Kong companies have operations in the mainland and have been lobbying for the lower tariffs and other benefits a free trade pact would bring. *AFP*

US to drop import duty law

GENEVA—A World Trade Organization arbitrator on Friday gave the United States until Dec. 27 to amend a law that violates open trade rules by diverting some import duties to American companies.

The decision gives the United States four months less than it asked to implement the ruling, which could require members of Congress to repeal a popular provision that gives hundreds of millions of dollars each year to US companies.

The European Union, Japan and other countries in Asia and Latin America who brought the case had asked for a July 27 deadline, six months after an WTO appeals panel ruling against the so-called Byrd amendment.

The law, named after Sen. Robert Byrd, a West Virginia Democrat, requires the Bush administration to distribute anti-dumping duties collected on "unfairly" priced imports to US companies that sought the protection. *Reuters*

SARS impact lingers in US

NEW YORK—Although the fear of SARS has begun to subside around the world, the disease is still expected to have a debilitating effect on second-quarter results of US companies doing business in Asia.

While SARS grabbed global headlines in March, it had little impact on first-quarter results. The real effect has been felt in the current quarter with consumers in Hong Kong, Taipei, Singapore and mainland China opting to stay home, curtailing visits to malls and avoiding restaurants and air travel.

A number of US companies have already warned about sales shortfalls in the second quarter, but analysts fear the extent of the damage remains to be seen.

"SARS is going to knock a few percent off some US companies' earnings from Asia, and I am sure there are going to be some negative surprises," said Andrew Cooke, head of global equity research at Citigroup Asset Management.

For the moment though, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome fears are fading, and the US stock market has improved on expectation of a healthier US economy and better earnings.

Among those likely to be hardest hit are airlines, cosmetics, fast-food and cell phone companies.

For example, UAL Corp.'s United Airlines. said that Pacific traffic was down 47 percent in May from a year earlier.

Northwest Airlines Corp., another carrier with many Pacific routes, said traffic was off 26 percent in May.

Airlines haven't predicted how they expect SARS to affect traffic on Asian routes going forward. *Reuters*

WorldCom deals face suspension

WASHINGTON—The government is considering suspending its business with WorldCom Inc., whose $11 billion accounting scandal last year led to the largest bankruptcy filing in US history.

WorldCom's government contracts are valued at more than $1 billion each year. Critics and competitors say the government has been too lenient with the company by continuing to award it work, including hiring WorldCom to build a wireless phone network in Iraq.

The inspector general of the General Services Administration, the government's contracting agency, has referred a review of WorldCom's federal business to an official in charge of suspensions, GSA spokesperson Mary Alice Johnson said Friday.

"The process of determining whether to suspend or debar WorldCom is active and ongoing," Johnson said.

Under federal rules, a suspension of up to a year would temporarily disqualify WorldCom from doing business with the government while an investigation is under way.

Debarment, a decision based on more conclusive evidence of wrongdoing, can exclude the company from government business for a period typically not longer than three years.

A suspension or debarment would only affect renewed or new contracts, Johnson said.

WorldCom spokesperson Natasha Haubold said questioning of WorldCom's government business has been prompted by "competitors who would much rather see MCI dissolved than to compete with us in the marketplace."

WorldCom hopes to emerge from Chapter 11 protection this fall under the name of its MCI long-distance unit. *AP*

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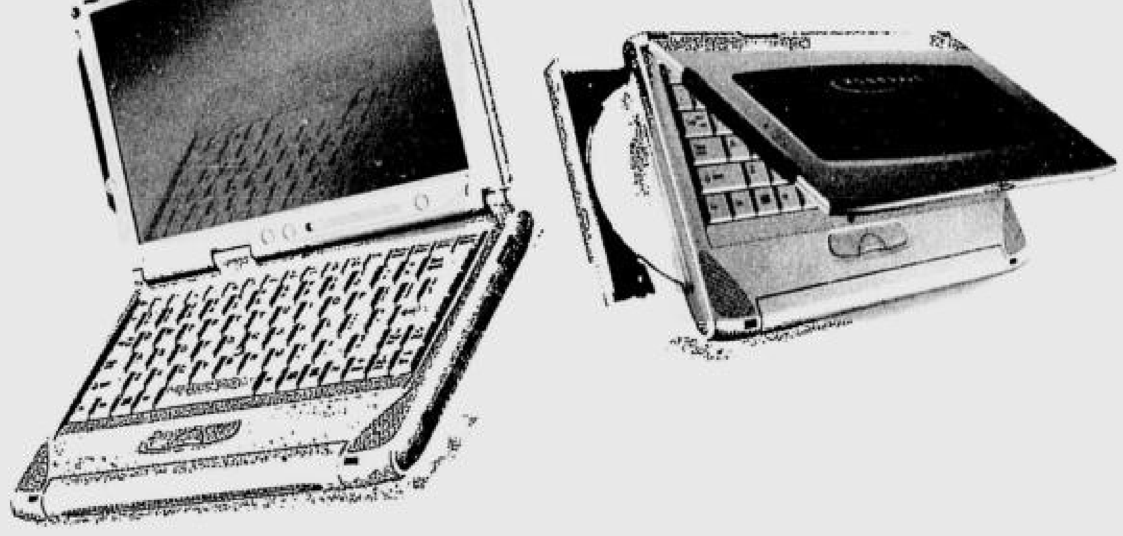

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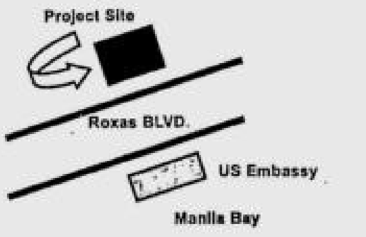

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that estate of VIRGILIO E. ZULUETA was adjudicated to his sole heir Ma. Dolores Z. Aranda per Doc.495 Page 100 Book X Series 2003 before Notary Public Maria Rowena F. Mojica of Makati City.
PDI-June 9,16&23, 2003

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the heirs of LIDWINA LOS BA—OS ABES had executed a Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement of estate with waiver of rights on April 10, 2003 and acknowledged the same before Notary Public Dante S. David for and in the City of Quezon, Philippines and bearing Doc. No. 139; Page No. 28; Book No. 1; Series of 2003 of his Notarial Register (PDI-June 2, 9 & 16, 2003)

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June 14, 2003 at the age of 68.

His wife **VIOLETA**; daughters **MONA CARINA ANGELA** and **ANA CHRISTINA**; brothers and sisters **SONNY GENIO, BEBE TALISIC, LANGGING RUBENOK, GRACIA PEREZ, MARJORIE CAGUIAT**, and **CYNTHIA GRAVES**; other relatives and friends will deeply miss him.

His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapel, Sucat Road, Parañaque.

Interment will be announced later.

Our Dearly Beloved

TITA PANGALIMAN CORTES

Born: August 29, 1936
Peacefully joined her Creator on June 13, 2003

Her bereaved family: husband **Col. Mariano S.I. Cortes Sr.**; daughter **Lalaine**; sons & daughters-in-law **Jojo** and **Rose, Neil** and **Chie** and **Froilan**; grandchildren **Chesca, Ima, Miggy** and **Ian**; sisters **Trining, Jean, Naty** and brother **Floro** and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel Q, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Inc., Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, June 18, 2003 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

LENNY Y. ALIKPALA

November 1, 1940 – June 7, 2003

Lenny died peacefully after living a full life in the service of the Lord. She was the daughter of the late **Judge Federico C. Alikpala** and **Julieta Ylagan-Alikpala**.

She is survived by her siblings, **Judge Federico Y. Alikpala Jr.** and **Digas Bustamante**; **Ethel** and **Jack Ward** in Kaneohe, Hawaii; **Agnes** in San Francisco, California; and **Edna** in Honolulu, Hawaii; her nephews and nieces **Dondi** and **Kara Alikpala, Christine** and **Ben Alfelor, Eileen** and **Delfin Cuajunco, Karen** and **Douglas Wrobel, Dennis, Dicky, Ellen, Michelle** and **Andrew Montemayor, Mariel** and **Erica Cortez**; and her grandnephews and grandniece.

Her mortal remains were cremated in Honolulu and will be brought to Manila for services on a date to be announced.

Please pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

In Loving Memory

On the 3rd Death Anniversary of

TAM SUN (PAM AH POO)

August 1, 1929 – June 16, 2000

(Founder of Anros & Sons Enterprises, Inc.
Tanjay City, Negros Oriental)

His family, together with his dearest wife **Angela**, children and children-in-law and all his grandchildren and great grandchildren request the pious readers to remember him in their prayers.

Holy Masses will be offered in his honor on June 16, 2003 at the following churches:

St. James The Greater Parish *Tanjay City, Negros Oriental*	6:30 AM; 9:00 AM; 6:00 PM
San Andres The Apostle Parish *Amlan, Negros Oriental*	6:00 AM
San Antonio de Padua Parish *Sibulan, Negros Oriental*	6:00 AM
St. Catherine de Alexandria Parish *Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental*	6:00 AM
Immaculate Concepcion Parish *Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental*	6:15 PM
Senior San Jose Parish *San Jose, Negros Oriental*	6:15 AM
St. Nicolas de Tolentino Parish *Bais City, Negros Oriental*	6:00 AM
St. Francis de Assisi Parish *Manjuyod, Negros Oriental*	6:00 AM
Mary The Queen Parish *West Greenhills, San Juan*	7:00 AM
Sts. Peter & Paul Parish *P. Burgos Street, Makati City*	7:00 AM
St. John Bosco (Don Bosco) Parish *Pasay Road, Makati City*	7:30 AM
Christ The King Parish *Greenmeadows, Quezon City*	7:00 AM

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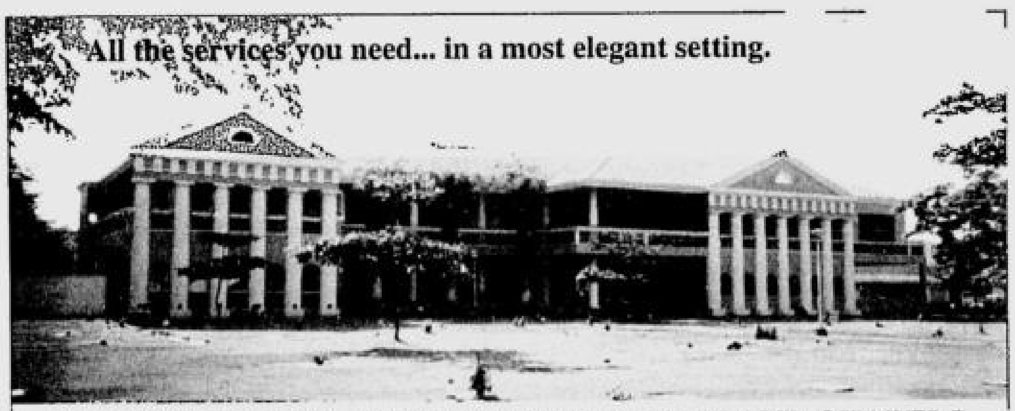

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"For My yoke
is easy and my
burden is light."
Matthew 11:30

ALEXANDRA LOURDES "RIA" PADILLA ROQUE

went home to our Heavenly Father
on June 14, 2003 at the age of 26.

Her loving parents **Chito** and **Ludy Roque**; brother **Gabby** and sister **Bea**, uncles and aunts, cousins, relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her mortal remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco until the afternoon of Tuesday, June 17, 2003. She will then be at the Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City. The funeral Mass will be celebrated at 12 noon on Wednesday, June 18, 2003.

Interment will immediately follow at the Manila Memorial Park Crematorium.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the "Make-A-Wish" Foundation will be greatly appreciated.

In Loving Memory
on the 1st Death Anniversary of

ROSELA ABSALUD y OBLIGAR

Who joined our Lord on June 16, 2002.

The family hereby thank all those who sympathized and condoled during the wake at Loyola Memorial Park.

From:
Mr. Juanito F. Absalud & Children

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NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE of UNSERVICEABLE STEEL TOWERS and SCRAP ACRs

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING: JULY 10, 2003 TIME: 2:00 PM PLACE: NPC SOLARIUM

The National Power Corporation will conduct a public bidding for the following items:

SCHEDULE-I	ITEM DESCRIPTION and LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
1.	One (1) lot Unserviceable Steel Towers, used and retrieved from repairs, rehabs and retirements of NPC Transmission Lines. Located at LIGAO S/Y and DARAGA S/Y both in Albay	P 1,320,000.00 / lot

OPEN TO ALL SCRAP METAL BUYERS WHO CAN PRESENT THEIR T.I.N. AND INCOME TAX RETURN

SCHEDULE-II	ITEM DESCRIPTION and LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
1.	One (1) lot Scrap Aluminum Conductors Steel Reinforced Cables 166,600 kgs., more or less, located at NPC-Mexico Warehouse in Mexico, Pampanga	P 49.08 / kg.
2.	One (1) lot Scrap Aluminum Conductors Steel Reinforced Cables 10,000 kgs., more or less, located at NPC-Dasmariñas Substation in Dasmariñas, Cavite	P 49.08 / kg.
3.	One (1) lot Scrap Aluminum Conductors Steel Reinforced Cables 100,000 kgs., more or less, located at NPC-Ligao Stockyard in Ligao, Albay	P 49.08 / kg.
4.	One (1) lot Scrap Aluminum Conductors Steel Reinforced Cables 100,000 kgs., more or less, located at NPC-Daraga Stockyard in Daraga, Albay	P 49.08 / kg.

PARTICIPATION IN THIS SCHEDULE-II IS LIMITED ONLY TO PREVIOUSLY PRE-QUALIFIED BIDDERS.

Sealed bids in the prescribed form shall be received until 2:00 PM on July 10, 2003 at the Solarium Function Room, Bldg. 1, NPC, Diliman, Q.C. and shall then and there be opened and publicly read. For Bid Forms at P 500.00 per set, additional information and request for inspection, please see Mr. S.V. LOMUNTAD, Jr. at the above address or call telephone no. 922-8431 or 924-5384. Deadline for the issuance of bid forms is 4:30 PM on **July 9, 2003**. All bids must be submitted with the following:

1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE;
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN OF THE BIDDER (2002) OR FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY (ORIGINAL OR BIR CERTIFIED COPY).

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality found therein and to accept / reject such proposal as may be advantageous to its interest.

For the Materials Management Department

(Sgd.) **F.B. TACATA, JR.**
OIC, MMD

(PDI–June 16, 17 & 18, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
E-mail: sssemail@info.com.ph • Web site http://www.sss.gov.ph
Visit the SSS website for Bid Invitations

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING FIRM & CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

The **SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM** is inviting Architectural Firms and Construction Managers for the proposed construction of SSS San Fernando – La Union, SSS San Fernando – Pampanga and SSS Calamba Branch Buildings:

		Minimum Requirement
1.	Architectural/Engineering firm*	10 years experience in architectural/ interior design/engineering design
2.	Construction Management firm*	10 years experience in Construction Management Services

*Award of projects will be on a per lot basis i.e. one (1) Architectural Firm/ Construction Manager will be hired to prepare the Architectural plans and supervise the construction, respectively, of the three (3) projects above mentioned.

Shortlisting of the prospective firms will be based on Executive Order No. 40 and NEDA Guidelines.

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC):

- Architectural Design - P2,753,211.00 (or 4% of the estimated cost of the 3 projects)
- Construction Manager - P1,101,284.40 (or 1.6% of the estimated cost of the 3 projects)

Source of Funding : Capital Expenditures (Building Construction)

Interested bidders must secure the Eligibility Requirements from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat, 6th Floor, SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Only the eligible bidders shall be required to pay the non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 each for architectural design and construction manager to cover the cost of the bidding documents. For any inquiry, please call telephone numbers 922-2991 or 920-6401 local 5490/5491. The deadline for the submission of eligibility documents is on **26 June 2003.**

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI - June 16, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

AN INVITATION

The Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) Executive Committee and National Technical Committee would like to invite interested parties to a public consultation relative to the proposed revisions of DA Administrative Order No. 39 s. 1999, otherwise known as the **REVISED IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES ON THE UTILIZATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS ENHANCEMENT FUND.**

The public hearing will be held on 19 June 2003, 2:00 p.m. at the Convention Hall of the Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Visayas Avenue corner Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Due to limited seats and operating expenses, interested groups/parties are enjoined to send only one (1) representative per group/ organization. Expenses incurred in connection with attendance at the consultation shall be borne by the participants concerned. Persons intending to participate at the consultation may wish to refer to the DA website: http:/www.da.gov.ph for detailed information about the proposed revisions.

Interested parties may obtain further information and send expression of interest at the address below:

THE ACEF NATIONAL TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT
Room 209 – Project Development Service,
Department of Agriculture
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. (02) 928-8741 to 65 local 209 / 232
(02) 922-0930

For administrative purposes, the deadline for expression of interest to attend consultation is on June 17, 2002.

(Sgd.) **LUIS P. LORENZO, JR.**
Secretary
Chair, ACEF Executive Committee

(PDI–June 9, 12 & 16, 2003)

DTSI

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Effective June 12, 2003; DTSI will be moving from the 5F Domionion Bldg, 833 A. Arnaiz Ave., Legazpi Vill, Makati. To their new location at:

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
METROSTAR EXPRESS

INVITATION TO BID

The DOTC-MRT3 Bids and Awards Committee invites all interested bidders/ suppliers to prequalify and bid for the **PROCUREMENT of APPROXIMATELY 500,000 PIECES OF MAGNETIC TICKETS** with a total approved budget amounting to **THREE MILLION TWO HUNDRED FORTY PESOS & 00/100 (P3,240,000.00).**

Accreditation requirements can be obtained from the Administrative Division, DOTC-MRT3 Depot Office, North Avenue Cor. EDSA, North Triangle, Quezon City. Submission of duly accomplished and notarized pre-qualification documents shall not be later than 5:30 p.m., **23 June 2003**. Accredited/pre-qualified bidders/suppliers need not apply.

Bid documents and complete specifications are available for issuance upon payment of P1,000.00, which is not refundable, and upon presentation of Notice of Invitation and Certificate of Accreditation.

The DOTC-Metrostar Express reserves the right to reject any or all of the bids proposals without offering any reason, waive any informality therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government. This office, likewise, assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids nor does it guarantee that an award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **MARIO C. MIRANDA**
Acting General Manager and
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee
Metrostar Express

(PDI - June 8 & 16, 2003)

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Region VII, Sudlon, Lahug, Cebu City
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E-mail address: dilgro7@cvis.net.ph / dilg_r7@mozcom.com
www.cvis.net.ph/dilg

June 12, 2003

INVITATION TO BID

The DILG Region VII is inviting licensed suppliers to bid for the supply and delivery of the following, viz:

- **1,878 sets GUARD BATUTA (nightstick) with tear gas and extra cartridged, holder and whistle**

Suppliers/Dealers who are interested to participate in the bidding may obtain documents from the DILG Regional Office 7.

All bids must be submitted at DILG Regional Office 7, Lahug, Cebu City on **July 18, 2003** accompanied with a Bid Security in an amount equivalent to five (5%) percent of the total bid proposal either in Cash/Manager's Check and surety bond callable upon demand. Bid price should include the cost in the conduct of 3-day training and demonstration to 1878 law enforcers, tanod and volunteers on how to use said equipment.

The DILG-7 reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects or informalities found therein and accept the offer found to be most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **DR. PEDRO A. NOVAL, JR.**
ARD/BAC Chairman

(PDI–June 16, 2003)

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Center for Learning and Teaching Styles, Philippines

LEYTE V ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
PO Box 162 Ormoc City 6541
Tel. Nos. (053) 561-4075 / (053) 561-4111

INVITATION TO BID

The Leyte V Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LEYECO V), Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte, invites all eligible suppliers to submit bids for the supply of Line Materials, Hardware and Equipment for the following Line Expansions: a) 3rd Leyte District – four (4) Sitios funded under NEA Subsidy 2003; b) 4th Leyte District – two (2) Sitios funded under NEA Subsidy 2003 and; c) 4th Leyte District – Nine (9) Sitios funded under NPC – XL.

Bid documents shall be issued to interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Hundred Pesos Only (P500.00) starting June 19, 2003.

Pre-bid conference will be held on **June 26, 2003** at 1:30 in the afternoon at LEYECO V Boardroom, Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City.

Sealed bids will be received by the Pre-bids and Awards Committee (PBAC), at LEYECO V Main Office in Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte on **July 10, 2003** at 1:30 in the afternoon, at which time and place said proposals will be opened and read in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.

LEYECO V reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any minor defects or informalities therein and to accept any or all offers or proposals as may be considered most responsive and advantageous to the Cooperative. It assumes no obligation whatsoever for any expenses or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **JOVENAL L. ALESNA**
General Manager

(PDI–June 13 and 16, 2003)

Controversial 'Moses' to finally see development

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

THE DE La Salle University (DLSU) and Filipino software startup Softlabs recently signed a deal leading to the commercial development of a middleware that will allow Microsoft Windows applications to run on open source systems.

The deal was consummated last week after several months of negotiations, said Caslon Chua, director of graduate studies of the College of Computer Studies at DLSU.

Enter Ligsay

Softlabs chief executive Frederick Lewis said the deal with the Philippine university involves the co-development of the software conceptualized by an ex-employee of the company.

While there were no concrete plans on how the agreement would proceed, Chua said the University's Office of Consulting and Education Center would likely tap some faculty and students in the College of Computer Studies to work on the project.

Softlabs has come up with a conceptual framework for a software program codenamed "Moses," which stands for "multiple operating system environment simulator."

This concept, if it becomes commercial, would allow Windows applications to run on non-Microsoft operating systems like Linux, according to Softlabs. Moses is also deemed to "level the playing field in the operating system market."

Softlabs, however, is currently engaged in a legal battle over ownership of concept behind the unique software.

Brainchild

Moses is apparently the brainchild of Henry Ligsay, a former Filipino Softlabs employee who left the company early this year.

Ligsay was the ex-chief software architect of Softlabs (then known as SpècOps Labs) until he left for undisclosed reasons.

This prompted Softlabs' Lewis to file a criminal complaint against Ligsay, accusing him of violating company rules of non-disclosure and copyright infringement after Ligsay was allegedly linked to a takeover bid of Softlabs by US investors.

Based on the projections of Softlabs, Moses would generate revenues of $660,000 in its first year of operations from licensing the software to white box system builders in the United States, and a major strategic original equipment manufacturer, which is IBM.

On its third year, the company expects to hit minimum revenues of $90 million from licenses alone.

No competition

The company is currently downplaying that its software would be competing with Microsoft Corp.'s Windows operating system.

However, Softlabs indicated that Moses would undercut Microsoft's dominant position in the operating system market, as original equipment manufacturers and white box system builders would be able to build Linux boxes that are able to run Windows applications.

Over $30 billion isspent yearly on operating system software, and about 300 million operating system copies are shipped every year, according to Softlabs.

Oracle offer to buy PeopleSoft brings uncertainty, say analysts

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

ELLISON

AN INDEPENDENT group of analysts said that Oracle's offer to buy PeopleSoft last week would cause some uncertainty in the enterprise resource planning (ERP) market.

"Just by announcing this tender offer, Oracle creates a huge amount of uncertainty and doubt among PeopleSoft users, prospects and employees. (It also) potentially freezes the ERP market, which would hurt PeopleSoft and JD Edwards more than Oracle," US-based analyst Meta Group said.

Freezing the market would mean stopping the sales cycle for current sales of ERP software and services.

Oracle Corp. led by its chief executive Larry Ellison announced recently an unsolicited offer to buy rival PeopleSoft for $5.1 billion ($16 per share of PeopleSoft). This offer came as PeopleSoft, an ERP solutions provider, was negotiating a friendly merger with rival JD Edwards.

A combined PeopleSoft and JD Edwards would make a formidable team against Oracle, but Oracle's bid for PeopleSoft would endanger the latter's merger with JD Edwards, thereby eliminating a potential threat.

Meta Group said that Oracle's move has somehow created some anxiety among PeopleSoft users, and a "near-term uncertainty (that) will drive away PeopleSoft customers away."

After Oracle made the offer, PeopleSoft stocks, however, soared over $18 a share, showing the company was worth more than Oracle deemed. Thus, Oracle has to sweeten its $16 offer even more.

Ellison, however, told analysts that the takeover bid for PeopleSoft did not really include JD Edwards. He said that if the company acquired PeopleSoft, Oracle would re-evaluate the JD Edwards deal.

Meta Group said that Oracle's takeover bid would likely harm PeopleSoft sales by making prospects re-evaluate it as their ERP vendor.

Oracle is expected to benefit from the PeopleSoft acquisition. Apart from gaining a new customer base for its own ERP products, the most obvious benefit is eliminating one of its major competitors and gain about $80 million in "synergy" savings after the merger, as stated by Ellison, said Meta Group.

The size of PeopleSoft's customer base is approximately the same as Oracle's.

Ellison has indicated to analysts that Oracle would support PeopleSoft products for an indefinite time while preparing a migration path to Oracle, but it would immediately stop new sales of PeopleSoft.

Meta Group, however, noted that Oracle would face major challenges in combining with PeopleSoft.

"The technical architectures of the two technologies have many differences, making it more difficult to create a realistic upgrade path that will actually capture PeopleSoft users for Oracle," the analyst said.

The analyst also noted that the two ERP vendors "have strikingly different business cultures."

"Effectively combining these organizations will be difficult, as shown by the many similarly ambitious mergers that have failed," Meta Group added.

An online poll by Meta Group showed that forcing PeopleSoft customers to migrate to Oracle would bring bad news. Preliminary results showed that two-thirds of respondents said a successful Oracle offer would be unfavorable for PeopleSoft users.

"The best hope for PeopleSoft users may be that a white knight will appear, but the question is who? The three giants in the industry—SAP, Microsoft and IBM—are unlikely to be interested. Siebel, which needs to acquire a back-end system, is not likely to compete with Oracle and probably does not have the resources to compete with Oracle for such a prize," the analyst said.

Meta Group added that SAP might stand to benefit from this development, capturing some of PeopleSoft's users if they are forced to migrate to Oracle. Meanwhile, both IBM and Microsoft, which are playing in the low end of the ERP market, would face minimal impacts on their business if indeed Oracle would buy out PeopleSoft or if PeopleSoft merged with JD Edwards.

Oracle, however, is leaving itself a back door in this offer, the Meta Group said. The analysts said that Oracle could eventually say that it does not regard PeopleSoft as worth the extra cost of increasing its offer and walk away from the deal. By then, however, the damage to PeopleSoft and its customers, and to the prospect of the merger with JD Edwards, may have already been done.

Local operators jockey for position in mobile electronic mail market

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

TWO of the Philippines' top mobile operators have unveiled services targeting corporate customers who require mobile extensions of common office applications, such as e-mail.

Globe Telecom, in partnership with Singapore Telecom (SingTel) and Optus, unveiled Wednesday a service known as "Mobilemail." This service uses the latest handheld devices such as Palm's Tungsten W, to bring corporate e-mail to technology-savvy executives who are often on the road.

Through its corporate solutions arm GlobeSolutions, Globe said the service was launched in the Philippines simultaneously with SingTel and Optus of Australia.

Developed by US-based firm System Seven, MobileMail will give Globe corporate subscribers access to their e-mail and other office applications, including calendars and corporate contacts, among others.

Globe is offering a variety of handhelds for this premium service. Available handhelds include Palm Tungsten W, QTEK 1010 and Handspring Treo 270 and Treo 180.

Globe said that MobileMail is now being offered for a P500 monthly fee for the personal edition, plus 0.15 centavos per kilobyte charge for use of the General Packet Radio Service.

Last month, rival Smart Communications announced that it has brought the Blackberry handheld to the Philippines.

A popular mobile messaging device in the United States, Blackberry is now being offered by Smart in the country as an "always-on, always-connected" wireless e-mail client, as well as a GSM mobile phone.

Canadian firm Research in Motion (Rim Technologies) developed Blackberry.

Smart said that Blackberry is being offered as a "push-based" solution, in which corporate e-mail is literally pushed to subscribers automatically instead of them downloading it.

Infotech learned later that Blackberry would initially work with organizations using Microsoft Exchange or Lotus Notes.

Blackberry was first introduced in North America in 1999, then in Europe in 2001 and Asia Pacific in 2002.

RP needs to change mindset about PC games: Samsung

LIKE South Korea, touted as the most wired nation in the world, the Philippines should consider networked computer games as more than just entertainment.

"Very few people understand the value of (network) games. In Korea, people who play these games are considered as 'stars.' They earn $20,000 up to $200,000 a year as professional PC gamers," Sang Youl Eom, president and chief executive officer of Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp., told local reporters.

Similar to how billiards evolved from a national pastime to a favorite Filipino sport, Eom said networked PC gaming is fast becoming a sport and a huge industry—even bigger than the entertainment industry.

Estimates in Asia Pacific place the value of the online gaming market at $533 million in 2002, according to Samsung.

With such a scenario, Eom admits that Samsung Electronics Philippines wants to push its brand in this lucrative market which targets the youth.

Samsung is investing $300,000 in the training of top Filipino network PC gamers who will compete in South Korea in October this year in a global competition.

For the second time, the Korean firm is sending nine young gamers to compete in popular PC games like CounterStrike, Starcraft Brood War and Warcraft 3.

"We have indirect benefits from this activity. If Samsung didn't do this, Filipinos would not be able to be part of the global competition. But at the same time, I'm a businessman. This will promote the Samsung brand," the Korean executive said.

Market research firm International Data Corp. (IDC) said that online gaming in Asia is now dominated by South Korea, which accounts for 54 percent of the revenues generated out of this industry in the region.

Thus it is not surprising that Samsung is taking the lead in terms of investing money to support global competitions such as the World Cyber Games held in Seoul, Korea.

Tjader Regis, project manager for the 2nd Samsung Cyber Games, said that Filipino gamers should be trained more to become at par with Korean players. Also a hard-core PC gamer himself, Regis is now responsible for the Samsung-backed training of the nine Filipino representatives to Seoul.

"To boost the culture of gaming here, we should get the PC gaming industry to be recognized as a legitimate industry in the Philippines. Samsung is now offering the money to support such activities. But we need all the help we need," he said.

Regis said that Samsung is expected to accredit 80 Internet cafés as centers where its team could train at the expense of the Korean firm.

Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

Tech giants claim SARS infected sales

WASHINGTON—Global technology giants Nokia, Motorola, Dell and now Texas Instruments are blaming SARS for slowing sales in Asia, sending some stocks tumbling.

But companies said the impact of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) should be brief. Industry insiders also warned against exaggerating the disease's financial fallout.

In the first quarter of 2003, Texas Instruments said it had problems selling off a stockpile of wireless semiconductors it had built up in Asian markets, particularly China.

Wedbush Morgan analyst David Wu said the impact of SARS on Texas Instruments should be viewed as a "non-recurring tragic event", no different to other natural disasters.

"We view the semiconductor industry recovery as gaining traction and poised to accelerate between the fourth quarter of 2003 and the second quarter of 2004," he said in a report to clients.

Kevin Rollins, chief operating officer at computer maker Dell, told a conference in New York that his company had already factored the SARS impact into its forecasts.

The impact "was a little bit overblown in terms of demand as we see it," he said.

Finnish mobile phone giant Nokia and US technology group Motorola Inc. this week blamed SARS for weaker-than-anticipated Asian sales.

Nokia warned that sales of mobile phones in the second quarter would be at the low end or below its forecast range of 4 percent to 12 percent growth, when compared to last year.

Motorola also blamed SARS for disappointing sales of cellular handsets in Asia.

Semiconductor product sales were also hit in Asia, it said, as customers adjusted their inventories to respond to the decline in Asian sales. **AFP**

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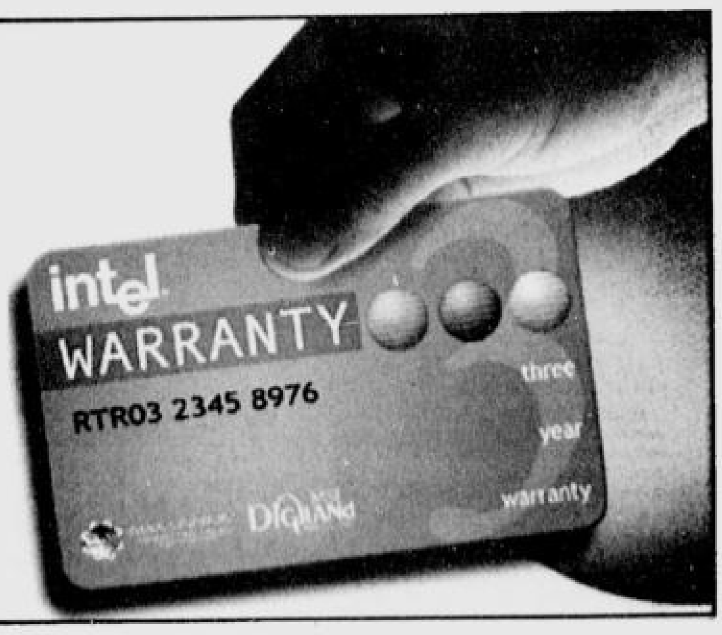


INFOTECH

E-mail: pr_info_tech@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Leo Magno**

Lack of funds, skills slow down government info tech programs

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

GOVERNMENT agencies still identify lack of funds and necessary information technology skills as factors slowing down the implementation of its modernization programs, an official told Infotech.

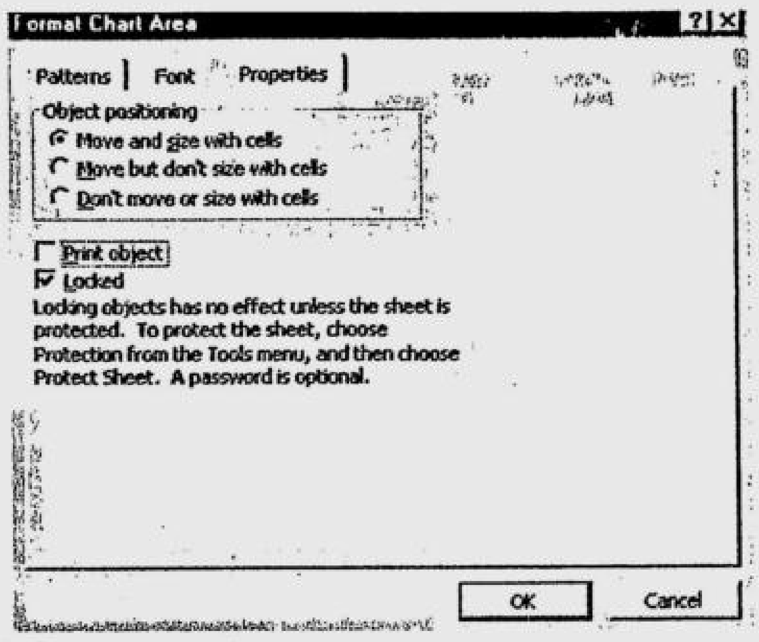
In a public forum hosted by the National Computer Center (NCC), government agencies said that while they have had computerization plans in place, the execution has been slow due to lack of high-tech skills within their ranks, according to Nieva Neri, head of the policy and standards development group of the NCC.

In most cases, technical people the government hires to work on projects eventually leave the agencies for high-paying jobs in the private sector.

Neri also noted the lack of coordination between top-level officials and middle management personnel as another obstacle for the modernization programs to be executed smoothly.

Based on NCC figures, 203 of the total 379 (53 percent) of national government agencies have submitted their Information Systems Strategic Plans (ISSP). Out of the 203, only 88 are actively implementing their plans, while the rest have plans that have lapsed or have not been endorsed by the NCC, Neri said.

Staritng this year, the Department of Budget and Management has inserted a provision in the 2002 General Appropriations Act that requires agencies to submit an ISSP before the agency approves allocation of budgets for IT-related acquisitions.



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How to prevent Excel charts from being printed

POWERTIPS

By Jerry Liao

DO you want to protect your MS Excel charts so that no one can have a printed copy of it? Here's how to do it :

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Microsoft plans to put anti-virus in Windows OS

By Gerry Plaza

AFTER TOPPLING Netscape in the browser wars of 1990s, Microsoft is hell-bent on dominating a new front: anti-virus software.

According to an Internet report, Microsoft plans to acquire a Romania-based anti-virus firm to fortify its "Trustworthy Computing" initiative aimed at providing reliable anti-virus protection for Windows users. Microsoft announced the plans, which includes the purchase of technology and intellectual property of the Bucharest anti-virus firm GeCad and the hiring of some of its employees.

A Microsoft official was quoted in the reports as saying that the Redmond, Washington-based software giant is mulling a paid subscription service to allow Windows users to receive regular anti-virus updates and the "Microsoft seal" of protection against malicious code. The report further said that Microsoft intended to have the anti-virus software embedded into Windows itself.

Not long ago, Microsoft braved the US government anti-trust gauntlet in bundling the Internet Explorer browser into Windows. Despite the anti-trust suits and industry flak, Microsoft nevertheless succeeded in positioning Internet Explorer as the "default browser" of almost all Windows users and literally obliterated Netscape's market leadership.

With charges of anti-competitive practices, Microsoft is sure to face the same flak with this move—particularly from current anti-virus leaders Symantec, Network Associates, and Trend Micro, which offer third-party virus protection software for Windows.

But officials from these anti-virus firms remain unfazed. According to some officials from the anti-virus big three, expertise remains the competitive advantage in the market. Despite the move, these officials are confident that users will continue to patronize third-party anti-virus software due to that.

Reports added that the anti-virus functionality will form an important part of succeeding versions of the Windows operating system. Microsoft had said that the anti-virus program is a step toward creating a more "trustworthy" Windows amid criticism of the platform's vulnerability to virus attacks.

Should Microsoft complete the GeCad acquisition, the company's anti-virus engine, RAV, would be integrated into Windows.

Despite its relative obscurity, GeCad performed well in benchmark tests in Germany against offerings from other leading anti-virus firms. This fact lured Microsoft in crossing the vast seas for the possible acquisition.

Now with the possible acquisition of GeCad technology, viruses on Windows might hopefully be just a thing of the past.

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Mindanao is key to growing economy

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

FIREFIGHTS and artillery barrages shake the earth of Muslim Mindanao. Death visits the camps of the Army and of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Relief centers are filled as villagers flee for their lives. The cycles of war and peace are repeated, shrouding the region in a veil of pessimism.

Fighting in a few provinces darkens the image of the entire Mindanao. How then does one rebuild the nation's "Land of Promise?" What specific measures must be accomplished? Reform packages have been prepared, and they deserve attention.

The Mindanao Agenda

Early on in 2001 economists Drs. Lourdes and Fermin Adriano wrote a paper called "Peace and Reconstruction Imperatives for Mindanao's Enhanced Development" (PRIMED)." The document suggested how the government, the private sector, and civil society could rebuild the region in the medium term.

Then in November 2001 Mindanao development leaders held a workshop and drafted a roster of issues and an action agenda for the region. In doing so it also fleshed out the recommendations of the Adrianos. The document was called The Mindanao Agenda.

Relevant questions guided the workshop in grouping the measures. How urgent was the need to address the issue? How feasible would the action be in the short term, given the constraint in resources? Would the measure yield much impact, especially for the most vulnerable and marginalized? Would the intervention be strategic in nature?

Local reforms, national impact

Pursuing The Mindanao Agenda will yield much fruit for the Philippine economy, says the document. One reason is that fighting poverty in Mindanao will go a long way to reduce poverty on the national level. A second reason is that resolving the Mindanao conflict will promote peace and order in the Philippines.

This in turn will hike investments and turbo-charge commerce.

Third, the nation has attained momentum in foreign trade through agreements like BIMP-EAGA. That is, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines comprise the East Asean Growth Area, which is fed by trade through Mindanao and Palawan. So it is vital to sustain this momentum.

Fourth, Mindanao is proud of its network of development partners. The key players come from public agencies, business groups and civil society organizations. The network is a valuable asset for quickly implementing social projects.

Home of the poorest provinces

Among the island groups, Mindanao suffers the most poverty. Fully 45 percent of families there live below the poverty line. Of this number, 1.4 million Mindanao families don't even meet the minimum food threshold. While poverty is least severe in Metro Manila, it is worst in the Caraga and western Mindanao regions. The data show that the poor in Mindanao are among the poorest in the Philippines.

The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in particular goes through the worst hardship. School children in ARMM spend the least number of years in class. The ratio of youths participating in high school is also on the way down. Girls get less education than the boys. The youth are denied their education largely because of the clash of arms in the area.

Peace to attract investors

At present the violence in the island has frightened local and foreign investors. Trying to keep up with a business-as-usual façade will not do. Neither will relief and rehabilitation work suffice. Peace-time budgets are not appropriate for a region at war with itself.

The Mindanao Agenda document continues that the state must "lay the foundations of peace and accelerate the peace efforts so as to put Mindanao back on the development track. In sum, pursuing peace is an economic imperative."

Reconstruction remains important though, for infrastructure projects will help restore economic activity and jobs in the conflict areas. The top priorities are the zones with the poorest and most vulnerable groups. The PRIMED paper suggests more infrastructure for Basilan, Camiguin, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi, costing some P837 million. Repairs on existing infrastructure will require another P271 million.

Gateway to Asean trade

The government prepared for the inclusion of Mindanao and Palawan in BIMP-EAGA back in 1994. After enjoying early progress, the growth area suffered in the wake of the Asian crisis of 1997-1999. The current administration came to power in 2001 and has strongly supported the renewal of BIMP-EAGA. Mindanao fits well into the growth area because of much activity by Muslim traders.

BIMP-EAGA will truly benefit Mindanao through more trade, investment, and tourism. The area will enjoy more movement of goods, services, and people. The partner countries can complement each other economically, as they specialize and ship their products to each other. Concluding part: specific measures of The Mindanao Agenda. *Comments to <darroyo@philonline.com>*

PEACE
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PURSUING "The Mindanao Agenda" will yield much fruit for the RP economy. BOBBY TIMONERA

SCENES like this in Maguindanao will soon be a thing of the past once growth is achieved. GENE BOYD LUMAWAG

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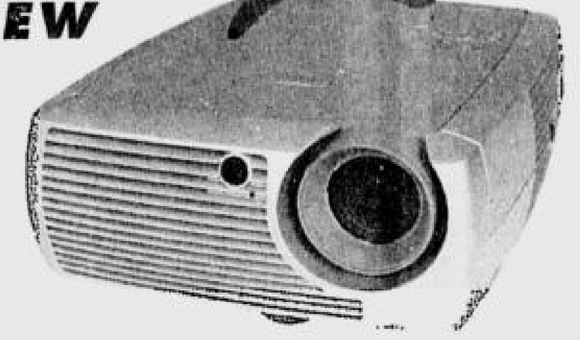

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Maximizing investments in human resources

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Edward L. Fereira

HUMAN resource management today involves new leadership dimensions, demands and risks.

All enterprises and institutions, whether profit making or not, should be concerned with the efficiency of human resource utilization and the impact of effective human resource management on organizational goals.

Maximizing the return on investment (ROI) in people does not mean exploiting, manipulating or taking advantage of employees.

It means providing the best benefit to employees through a systematic, organized approach that will lead to maximum use of talent and potential.

Companies must make revolutionary changes if they expect to ensure human effectiveness today and get ready for tomorrow's threats and opportunities.

Quality life

Business success should be judged not only by net income alone, but also by the enterprise's impact on the quality of human life. Business success should be measured in human terms—the extent to which the enterprise contributes to society and its stakeholders, including its employees.

The ultimate test of business effectiveness is its ROI in its human resources.

Some companies claim that their people are their most important asset, but this is not reflected in their priorities.

They don't even provide the opportunity for their people to make their full contribution, thus discouraging creativity in the workplace.

The key ingredient in the execution of business strategy is the passion and commitment of people. Hence, the challenge to management is to harness the power and passion of employees to deliver outstanding results for the organization.

Maximum capacity

The success of any organization will greatly depend on having an adequate number of human beings in the right jobs at the right time, all performing at maximum capacity.

Management and employees should discover the compatibility of their objectives and bring about the type of energized, cooperative teamwork that will lead to greater mutual goal achievement.

The 2002-2003 Best Employers in Asia study revealed that the top three challenges that CEOs must face are: ensuring sustainability through a changing environment, creating and delivering high performance with fewer resources, and the ability to retain and develop high quality talent.

The Management Association of the Philippines is the institutional partner of Hewitt Associates, The Asian Wall Street Journal, Far Eastern Economic Review and BusinessWorld for the Best Employers in Asia study.

The study showcases how world-class companies are attracting, retaining and motivating the key talents they need to achieve business success.

Job generators

Participating organizations represent the biggest job generators in the country today. A total of 40 companies and over 11,000 employees participated in the study.

The local best employers were identified in eight countries: China, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. The best employers in each country then become contenders for the regional Best Employers in Asia.

There are six key attributes common to best employers: These are:

- Sharp focus and clarity
- Relentless development of best talents
- Focusing on the most important matters
- Respect for employees
- Passion for outstanding achievement
- Family-like culture in the workplace

If your company has these six attributes, you can then be a good candidate for Best Employer in Asia. A best employer is an organization that runs its business with people in mind. It implements policies and practices that engage its people and align them with the organization's business goals.

Ultimately, a best employer is an organization that recognizes the importance of people as its most important asset, and understands what it takes to attract, retain and motivate talented people to achieve business success.

(The author is president of the Management Association of the Philippines and president and CEO of Ferycor International Management Group Inc. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

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JOHN WANAMAKER

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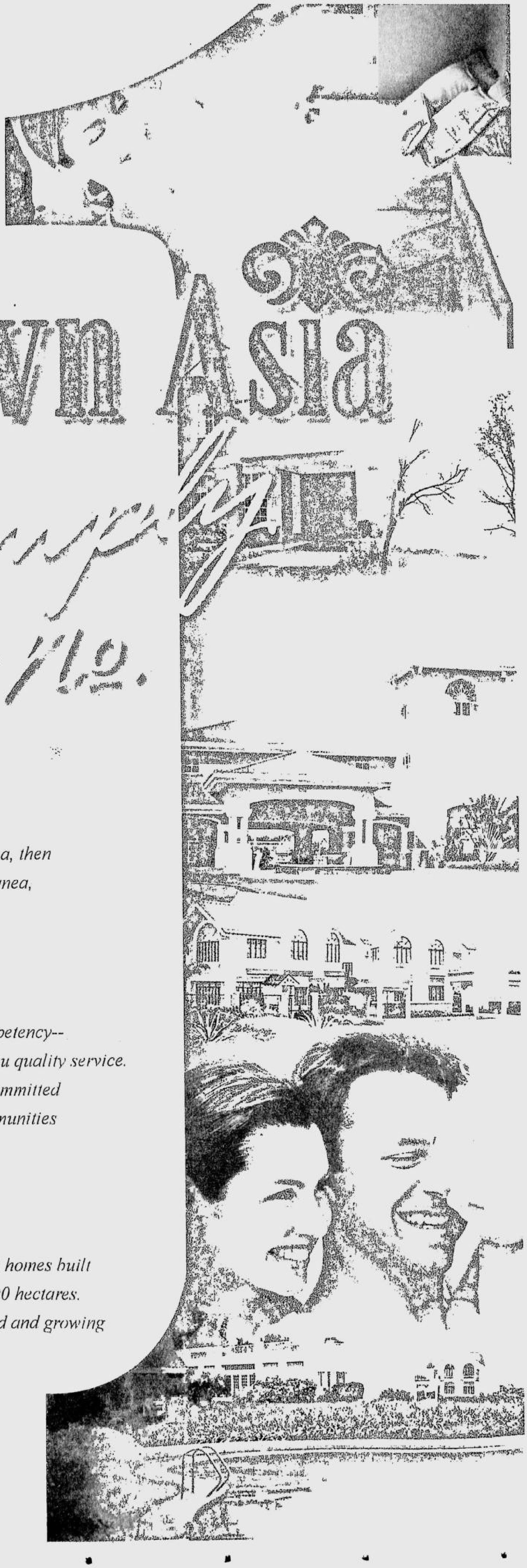

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RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Getting intimate with customers brings in cash

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IN the Tom Cruise movie "Minority Report," a beer ad knew its target consumer so well that it immediately recognized Tom Cruise's character as a potential customer and asked him if he wanted a Guinness.

The movie, which featured ads that identify customers by scanning a person's retina, may have shown customer relationship management to the extreme but Philippine retailers and even manufacturers want to at least come close to strengthen their share in the market amid intense competition.

Rewarding relationships

Carl Cruz, general customer development manager of Unilever Philippines, tells Business Monday in an interview that for Unilever, developing a more intimate relationship with customers as shoppers is the next big thing to increasing sales.

"Most manufacturers are good at using mainstream advertising but the trend is now in-store marketing campaigns," Cruz explains.

Unilever took a major step in mounting these campaigns last year when it put up dedicated personal care solution centers in major malls such as Robinsons, Walter Mart and Shopwise.

These are first solution centers put up by the giant conglomerate in the Philippines and even in Asia.

Solution centers

Through these solution centers for personal and beauty care products, Unilever and the shopping malls were both able to track the fast-moving goods and determine the preferences of customers and the data is shared by the manufacturer and the retailer.

"From the data that we got we were able to put up marketing campaigns that target specific consumers," Cruz says.

At the same time, the shopping center was able to develop loyalty because of the help provided by the solution centers, which are staffed by people knowledgeable about hair care or beauty care concerns.

The solution centers have done wonders for sales. For the Robinsons Galleria alone, sales shot up by 12 percent just a few months after the solution center was put up.

Unilever, on the other hand, used the data from the solution centers combined with other sources such as surveys and brand research studies to come up with a strategy to beat the competition.

In the end, Unilever is able to maximize the data to make sure that it manufactures only those products that would appeal to its consumers, thus, keeping competition at bay.

More manufacturers and retailers are projected to tap CRM as a competitive advantage as consumer loyalty becomes paramount.

A study by American international marketing consulting firm Frost & Sullivan showed that the CRM software market in the Asia Pacific would continue to grow.

It expects CRM revenues to reach $808.4 million by 2004. It saw Japan emerge as the largest CRM market with revenues of $111.9 million in 2001, followed by Australia with $52.7 million.

Information technology

Jennifer Ligones, industry manager for consumer products of SAP Philippines, one of the biggest providers of e-business solutions to the retail sector, says investments in improvements in information technology have increased since 1999 as foreign competition invaded the local retail industry.

The liberalization of the industry put pressure on the local players to enhance business processes to increase efficiencies and keep them nimble enough to battle competition.

These investments in business processes not only cover CRM but also improvement in backroom operations such as procurement, accounting and warehouse management.

Retail solutions

One of the companies that invested in a comprehensive retail solution is Supervalue Inc., the supermarket subsidiary of the Shoemart group of companies.

The solution called mySAP Retail provides Supervalue with "a single integrated solution for their logistics and retail processes.

The benefits of the integration include the ability to replenish products according to actual sales and as a result optimize their purchasing activities.

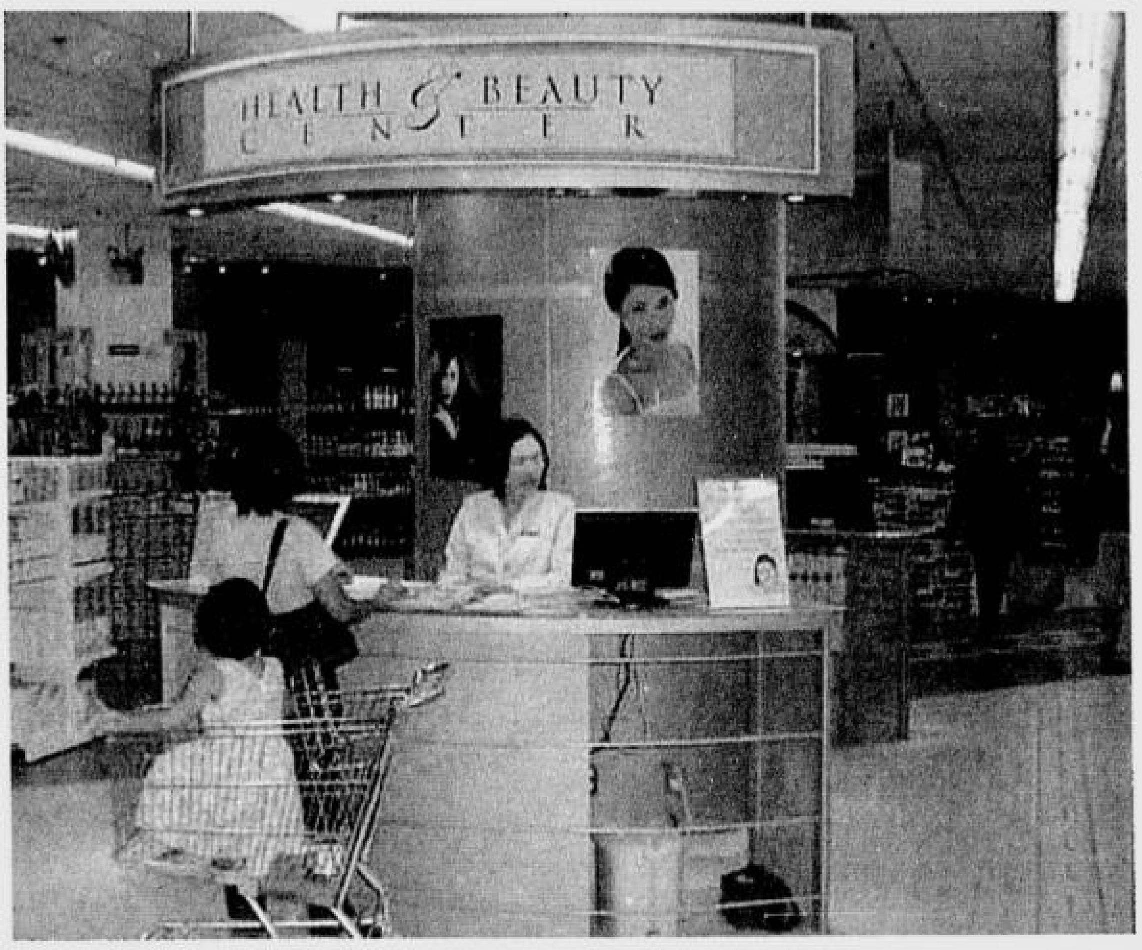
Supervalue managing director Manny Fong Jr. said in a statement that the company had to enhance its business operations because "the company has grown dramatically over the last several years and the IT environment was no longer able to properly support the growing business."

"This long-term IT investment will increase efficiency, reduce cost of operations and prepare us for greater competition," he added.

Cebu-based retailer Penshoppe has also invested in an e-business solution as early as 1999 to enhance efficiency and productivity by integrating information from all the company's business processes.

Penshoppe founder and CEO Bernie Liu said in an interview that the improvement in its IT processes enabled the company to keep track of inventory levels and by studying the data from sales, it was able to take advantage of sales trends, thus, providing customers with the products that they want at the time they want it.

Liu added that the IT investment provided the company with better control over resources and finances as operations and distribution networks expand and become increasingly complex. Penshoppe, thus, is well on its way to building a network of over 100 Penshoppe and Oxygen branches in the country and possibly the rest of Asia.



SOLUTION centers are part of Unilever/Robinson's attempts to know customers better.

The Sterling Paper Group of companies, on the other hand, invested in e-business solutions from SAP to improve business process productivity and to address the specific needs of its diverse clientele from distributors, wholesalers to retailers.

Sterling MIS manager Enrico Tan said in a statement that there was a time when coming up with prices for products was complicated. The sales department had to send a lot of memos to the information department to request changes in the system to accommodate frequent prices changes and promotions.

With the investments in IT, the process has been streamlined because key data are keyed in and instantly made available to all.

"As a result flexible pricing is made available to our clients quickly and efficiently and we avoid conflicts between internal departments," he explained.

The Sterling group includes Sterling, a manufacturing and distribution company of notebooks and other school supplies; Expressions, a retail chain and the Central Book Store.

Even food chain International Family Food Services Inc., the master franchisee for the Philippines of the international Shakey's pizza chain, acquired SAP's integrated enterprise solutions to increase efficiency and productivity.

Competition

"The Philippine fast-food market is extremely competitive," Eric H. Gallardo, IFFSI finance director explained, "so efficiency is critical to profitability and competitiveness."

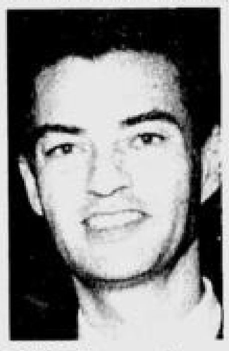
With its new system, Shakeys has improved the way it delivers the goods to franchisees, the way it bills and even the way it provides benefits to employees.

Ligones, however, noted that the rest of the Philippine retail industry players have been slow to invest in IT solutions, mainly because of the economic downturn that forced many to cut back on expenses, including the upgrade of their information technology systems.

She, however, expects that there would be a resurgence in interest soon because many retail firms realize that improving efficiencies is one of the major requirements to competing and staying alive in today's global retail industry.

MOVEMENTS

Makati Shangri-La has new GM



LYNCH

JARLATH Lynch was recently appointed as the Makati Shangri-La's new general manager.

Lynch brings with him a wealth of experience in the hospitality industry, having worked for 16 years in various international deluxe business hotels and resorts around the world.

Prior to this assignment, Lynch was the general manager of the Edsa Shangri-La.

Lynch has been with the Shangri-La group since 1993. His first assignment with the group was director of rooms with the Makati Shangri-La in 1993. A year after, he was given the position of profit improvement manager for the same property and in six months he was promoted to the position of resident manager for Shangri-La's Tanjung Aru Resort, Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia.

As GM, Lynch will continue to oversee the renovation efforts of the various areas of the hotel.

Astoria Plaza names manager

RUIZ

THE MANAGEMENT of Astoria Plaza has appointed Manuel L. Ruiz as marketing communications/public relations manager effective June 1.

Ruiz brings to Astoria Plaza years of experience in marketing and communications, public relations and hotel operations.

Ruiz will be spearheading Astoria Plaza's aggressive public relations campaign in line with Astoria Plaza's sales and marketing thrust.

The 38-story Astoria Plaza consists of fully serviced residential suites. It not only caters to walk-in clientele but also offers affordable long-staying and weekend get-away packages.

The Astoria Plaza is close to the Makati central business district and to academic institutions, shopping malls, entertainment facilities and sports facilities.

The Astoria Plaza is managed with distinction by Genesis Hotel and Resorts.

Search on for head Boy Scout

THE WORLDWIDE search is on for the next secretary general of the World Organization of the Scout Movement to succeed Jacques Morellon who is retiring soon.

Conducting the search on a pro bono basis as a world community project is The Amrop Hever Group, a leading global executive search company with 81 offices in 50 countries.

The search is open to men and women who may have been former international officials in a world body, senior business persons, ambassadors or senior executives in international NGOs.

He or she must have a strong identification with the fundamentals of scouting and must be able to speak and write in English and French.

The secretary general will be based in Geneva and will direct the work of the World Scout Bureau also based in that city. He or she is expected to lead, promote and safeguard the interests of world scouting.

WOSM has 28 million active members, male and female youth and adults, in 154 countries.

Cost reduction in small-scale operations

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS

By Christine S. Pardiñas
Contributor, UP ISSI

SO you've reviewed your production costs. And you found you've overshot your budget again. What is your reaction?

- Lay off workers to decrease labor cost?
- Compromise on quality of raw materials?
- Skip an "non-essential" production step, like double finishing or inspection?
- Skip promotion and other marketing activities?

Like most businessmen, you seem to be sailing a sinking boat.

To you, the owner-manager or operations head, the most practical solution is cost reduction. Why not?

A business operation is all about costs—from raw materials to utilities, advertising and promotion, warehousing and delivery.

But wait, before you start laying off people or buying cheap materials—think again.

Do you think doing so would guarantee an effective cost reduction program? Those would save you a fast buck, no doubt.

But what about the long-run viability of your business? What happens to your commitment to product quality? Your orientation to customer service?

Think of new ideas and approaches for better and more effective implementation of a cost-reduction program.

To produce results, the program must not be haphazard but rather carefully planned and organized.

Cost reduction fallacies

Cost reduction is basically an organized and planned method of reducing waste (e.g. materials, man-hours, time, etc.) and reducing expenses in operations in order to improve profits.

You may better understand cost reduction by knowing what it is not.

- Cost reduction is not a series of letters or directives from the owner or manager. Sad to say, this is how most programs are started in most companies. Sure, an order to reduce cost by 30 percent may be a fine way to start. However, such directives should also be backed up by organized planning and specific action plans with expected accomplishments. Any series of letters serve only as mere announcements or reminders.
- Cost reduction is not strictly an accounting function. Accounting reports are normally the basis for cost reduction initiatives and these are also the basis for verifying effects of programs implemented.

These do not, however, represent a cost reduction program, but rather should be used as tools in evaluating effectiveness of programs.

- Cost reduction is not the management directive which arbitrarily dictates. It is the management general directive which is subsequently disseminated in the organization to be translated into achievable action plans. Shotgun orders reduce costs, yes, but only temporarily. Cost reduction programs should not only be attainable but sustainable as well.
- Cost reduction is not a program based on management or personnel whims and idiosyncrasies. Such an approach indicates unhealthy development of management authority, and even if practiced, would hardly result in a continuing program.
- Cost reduction programs should be part of the company's culture—with the participation and commitment of all employees.

Categories

A cost reduction program in any business operation can be classified into three categories for more effective implementation—waste prevention, operations analysis and innovative ideas.

It is within these classifications that an active program can be organized, clarified and communicated within the whole organization.

- **Waste prevention** is the conservation of materials, equipment, labor and personnel resources. In short, it is saving on the things used to manufacture products or to provide services.

This classification is based on the premise that the best way to avoid waste is to prevent it from occurring in the first place. It is not very difficult to initiate simply because it deals with tangibles, results are immediate, benefits are measurable, and all employees can contribute.

- **Operations analysis**, in contrast to waste prevention, is a methodical assessment of all aspects of the business operations. Its purpose is to pinpoint inefficiencies and make improvements, thereby reducing unit costs. Through years of doing business, every company would come to a point where it operates under procedures that are outdated and impractical.

Too often, we find processes are followed by force of habit. Operations analysis can initiate a review of existing methods.

- **Innovative ideas.** Many companies implement excellent cost-reduction programs, but these are usually limited in scope.

The ingredient most frequently missing is the organized feed-in of new and innovative ideas from outside sources.

Your business may be doing well in itself, but any competitive organization needs to look around to discover new things in order to survive.

Essentials

Two words form the key in the development and implementation of an effective cost reduction program—Motivate and Stimulate.

Business owners or managers need to motivate the employees (as many as possible) to do something constructive about the program.

Then, having started them, stimulate them to sustain the activities and come up with new ideas.

The following checklist can guide you in starting a good cost-reduction program:

- Development of a program checklist. This involves identification and classification of costs. It also involves procedures to use such as setting objectives, responsibilities, targets, records, and measurement or evaluation policies.
- Form committees in order to identify responsibilities. It is necessary that any contributions by employees be recognized and compensated.
- Maintaining records of programs. Coupled with identifying responsibilities in specific programs, keeping details of activities, status and accomplishments is equally important. These are necessary in the preparation of accounting and management reports crucial in the planning of company strategies.
- Identification of cost-reduction idea sources. Ideas are the very heart of any cost-reduction program. Without these, any program would fizzle sooner or later.

Ideas may come from various sources e.g. employee suggestions, publications, industry associations, professional consultants, seminars, among others.

For proper implementation, ideas can be further classified into active ideas (under study), implemented, and rejected.

- Communication. This is perhaps the most critical portion of implementing a cost-reduction program for the simple reason that employees need to be informed of the program itself, the procedures, responsibilities and updates. Cost reduction can operate best when its objectives are fully disclosed.

The ultimate goal of cost reduction is, of course, higher profits. Most activities will actually be in the direction of lower costs and expenses.

However, complete analysis of these activities is required in order to arrive at the most economical project. And sometimes, it is necessary to spend money in order to save money.

Cost reduction is only one of the topics to be discussed in the UP ISSI's production management (ProdMan) course which will run starting July 5. For inquiries, call Blessie Clerigo at Tel. No. 928-7076 or e-mail info.issi@up.edu.ph.

("Growing your business" is a weekly series for growth-oriented small enterprises who need guidance in their expansion and growth stages. It is a service to the SME community by the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries (UP ISSI).)

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Editor Aries Espinosa

GlobeSolutions' MobileMail: Wireless e-mail now in RP

IN SIMULTANEOUS launches within the Asia Pacific region, innovations leader Globe Telecom, in partnership with leading telecommunications companies SingTel of Singapore and Optus of Australia, ushered in the first wireless e-mail service in the Philippines with the introduction of GlobeSolutions' MobileMail.

The three telecom partners under the SingTel Group, the largest multi-market mobile operator in the Asia Pacific, will be utilizing the System Seven technology to deliver new, value-added data services such as MobileMail to their subscribers in their respective countries.

According to Ferdz dela Cruz, Head of Globe Telecom's wireless business group, "Globe Telecom is proud to be the first to make this type of service commercially available in the Philippines. This reaffirms our aim at GlobeSolutions to provide relevant, innovative, leading-edge communications solutions that match the needs of our corporate clients."

Filipinos who want to be in the forefront of their fields can now experience this new technological advancement in mobile communications as the MobileMail service is now up and running. Thus, subscribers can now have the always-on connectivity they need.

MobileMail is a unique service that utilizes a platform developed by System Seven, recipient of the 2003 Mobile Service Product of the Year in the Unietd States for its mobile software architecture. This affords subscribers real-time access to their corporate e-mail, appointment list, corporate contacts and work on their office files while in transit. This enables mobile workers to increase their productivity, functionality and efficiency. With MobileMail, professionals on the go can now act on critical matters and make quick decisions anytime, anywhere.

According to Maridol Ylanan, assistant vice president for GlobeSolutions' sales, "Today, the e-mail is a standard means of business communication. Many of our subscribers spend a large part of their day away from their desks. Oftentimes, critical e-mails are read and acted on only when they get back to the office. With MobileMail, one gets to access the corporate e-mail, PIM information and documents stored in his desktop from any Internet-connected mobile device. Now, Globe subscribers can make the most of their time and become more productive while on the go."

MobileMail also addresses the IT world's most demanding security concerns by combining operator network capabilities with advanced security technologies to ensure that critical data remain safe and secure.

Since MobileMail is device-independent, it does not limit its features to the use of just one kind of gadget or handset. The service is easily accessible and can be done on any Internet-connected device, from a standard WAP/GPRS-capable cell phone, to the newest PDA phones, to laptop and desktop computers.

"MobileMail is a unique service that widens the spectrum of doing work on the go. Aside from the multi-tasking feature of MobileMail, subscribers can retrieve and attach documents stored in their personal computers and send it via e-mail through their mobile devices that helps them act on important business concerns as they happen," said Paolo Lopez, Head of GlobeSolutions business development.

At a recent media preview, Chris Cheng, head of GlobeSolutions technical and wireless applications and Paolo Lopez, business development consultant of GlobeSolutions, demonstrated the fast and efficient data-accessing service of MobileMail. Also present during the launch were Globe Telecom executives Chinky Alcedo, vice president for Globe Handyphone postpaid and prepaid marketing and GlobeSolutions manager for usage and loyalty Baby Sto. Domingo.

For inquiries on MobileMail, call GlobeSolutions hotline 730-1999 or e-mail GlobeSolutions at globesolutions@globetel.com.ph. To learn more about the service, log on to www.myglobe.com.ph/mobilemail.

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ACCESS your workstation anytime, anywhere with GlobeSolutions' MobileMail. Use state-of-the-art PDA phones like the Handspring TREO 270, Palm Tungsten W and the QTEK 1010. MobileMail may also be accessed using any Internet connected device.

GLOBE Telecom executives showcase their MobileMail enabled handsets, from left, GlobeSolutions business development consultant Paolo Lopez, head of Globe wireless business group, Ferdz dela Cruz, assistant vice president for GlobeSolutions sales, Maridol Ylanan, vice president for Globe Handyphone postpaid and prepaid marketing, Chinky Alcedo, head of GlobeSolutions technical and wireless applications, Chris Cheng and GlobeSolutions manager for usage and loyalty Baby Sto. Domingo.

Seven makes great things possible

AWARD- winning US mobile data solutions provider Seven is now in the Philippines, paving the way for Globe Telecom's MobileMail, the ultimate virtual office for people on the go.

Seven recently won the 2003 Mobile Service Product of the Year award from Media Network Magazine after it stood out in the Mobile Service category with its product System Seven. This mobile software enables mobile operators worldwide to provide a secure, real-time access to corporate applications and e-mail via any mobile device. System Seven bested other products since it introduced an innovation that provided end users with a superior service at the lowest total cost of ownership and its "go-to-market" strategy.

The annual Products of the Year Awards is conducted by Network Magazine, one of the most prestigious and longest running awards programs in the networking industry. Awardees are chosen by Network Magazine's award-winning editors who evaluate products and services based on technical ingenuity, broad appeal to the reader community, new features and applications, competitive enhancements and serviceability to the market.

Seven, a privately held company in Redwood City, California that has global operations in Europe, Asia Pacific and Japan, is now widening its service spectrum through the partnership with Globe Telecom, the innovations provider in the Philippines. Globe Telecom now joins the ranks of multiple tier-one operators worldwide like SingTel, Optus, Cingular Wireless, O2, Orange UK and Sprint PCS who share the System Seven breakthrough.

With the powerful partnership of Globe and Seven, communication and mobility reach a higher, boundless level, making great things in the Philippines truly possible.

GIVING an engaging overview of MobileMail is Ferdz dela Cruz, head of Globe's wireless business group.

CHECKING her e-mail while on the go through MobileMail is assistant vice president for GlobeSolutions sales Maridol Ylanan.

'Sa Aklat Sisikat' and Jollibee: Partners in building RP into a nation of readers

READING is something kids are interested to do. But their lack of opportunity to be exposed to a variety of books besides their usual textbooks have deprived them of the chance to enhance their reading habits and cultivate their love for books.

Now, Sa Aklat Sisikat (SAS) Foundation and Jollibee Foods Corp. are making use of a "slow but sure" approach to a reading program that would ensure a long-term benefit to the children as well as a sustainable module for the public schools. The partnership indicates the commitment of SAS and Jollibee to the development of Filipino children and their dedication to the advocacy of reading. The SAS Reading Program, in collaboration with the Department of Education (DepEd), works closely with school authorities and local government units in the implementation of the program.

The SAS Reading Program is well thought and well planned. Principals and teachers of participating schools are trained regarding the program mechanics and the latest practices in communicating the love of reading to their students. The hands-on participation of school administrators and educators gives them a sense of ownership of the Reading Program as well as a potential to enhance their teaching skills and their relationship with the students.

International School of Manila (IS) teacher Neni Sta. Romana-Cruz has been dedicating her time with SAS as its head trainer. "For three years, I have been training public school teachers in Manila, Muntinlupa, Nasugbu, and other project areas. Then we get a corps of educators to be our reading advocates," Sta. Romana-Cruz related.

These reading advocates compose the SAS GAS (Gabay ng Sa Aklat Sisikat) Team composed of advocate teachers who will attend updating seminars designed to upgrade their skills and encourage them to share their knowledge and best teaching practices with their co-educators. The GAS Team guarantees the sustainability of the program and thus, helps build a nation of readers through sharing their time, talents and teaching skills with new SAS project partners across the country.

After the teacher training, SAS starts to implement its Read-a-Thon which will run for 31 days. Like a gold mine ready to be discovered, 60 new, carefully selected books are provided per section for the Read-a-Thon. The quality of the reading materials were developed based on thorough planning and discussions with known experts.

Included in this list are Natasha Vizcarra's "Ang Itim na Kuting", Feny delos Angeles-Bautista's "Ang Kuya ni Karina", Rene Villanueva's "Alamat ng Bahaghari", and Virgilio Almario's "Sundalong Patpat", to name a few.

The books in the list were selected according to its Readability Index, Literary Value, and Filipino Family Values. Readability Index determines whether a book can be read and comprehended by a Grade Four public school student. SAS Foundation seeks to deliver books that are challenging to students yet accessible to their readers' abilities. Literary value speaks about the well-selected collection of titles from contemporary children's literature written, illustrated and published by Filipinos. Filipino Family Values is a criterion wherein SAS seeks to promote pro-social values like identity, pride, commitment, and excellence through books.

Complementing the SAS Reading Program is the SAS Reading Corner or Cart that was ingeniously designed by architect Andy Locsin and associates, which gives children a comfortable area to explore books. Cart serves as a reward for the school's compliance with the Reading Program's requirements. It is also a venue for children to continue their reading habits and develop kids interest and passion on getting hooked to reading books.

This year, SAS is working on reaching other regions in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. In particular, Jollibee's partnership with SAS would be able to help more public schools and children in Pampanga, Bulacan and Makati.

Jollibee vice president for marketing Inez Reyes declared, "Jollibee is a strong believer in the talents and capabilities of children. All we need to do is to equip them with the right knowledge and values and provide them with venues and materials to help them express their creativity. We acknowledge that as adults, we have the accountability to develop the full potential of children to become responsible citizens. The SAS Reading Program is one golden opportunity to mold our children to be our future leaders."

"We recognize that this program is taking the developmental approach in creating a long-term and sustainable reading program. SAS has really studied every process of the implementation and they have done it professionally and proficiently. Because we share with SAS the same vision of building the Philippines as a nation of readers, we are committing ourselves to this project," Reyes said.

THE MILD SEVEN NIGHTS OF SUMMER

Summer days sizzled into hot summer nights as Mild Seven set passions a-light with another leg of The Mild Seven Bar Tour. The Mild Seven sampling team cruised the top nightspots in the Ortigas Center recently and dished out free packs of Mild Seven Original and Mild Seven Lights to selected patrons. Among the tour's pit stops were Congo Grill, San Mig, Vincent's, and Tequila Joe's. The tour also headed to Chef & Brewer, The Forum, and Ten Years After before a rousing finale at Friends. The weekend's sampling activity marks the 9th week of Mild Seven's Metro Manila-wide bar tour. Cebu City also hosts the weekly Mild Seven Bar tours. Since its launch in February, the tour has visited almost 100 of Metro Manila's upscale watering holes.

Bits Clips

New hub for DTSI

IN THE almost 6 years it has been operational, DTSI has moved locations thrice, each time bigger and better than the last. Each time a proof of the aggressive attitude DTSI is taking to achieve the goals it has set for itself. To mark the latest step it has taken, by June 2003, DTSI will be moving its home from the 5th floor of Dominion Building to the 39th floor of PBCom Tower in Ayala Avenue, the tallest building at the heart of Makati. The new office, designed by Adrianse Group, is suited to complement the change of attitude the company's new players has integrated into the system. The new environment is set to contribute to the productivity of employees. Competitive attitudes are encouraged, but the new office will also foster a relaxed atmosphere that would help the advancement of the company. DTSI will be conducting business more systematically and more efficiently than ever. Along with the new office, DTSI will be having a new trunk line: 7575-888 for voice and 7575-833 for fax.

Orthodontic seminar

AHESCOR/3M Unitek will conduct a 1-day lecture on July 20 at the Westin Philippine Plaza. Dr. George Soh, a graduate of Baylor University in Texas, with a certificate and MS degree in orthodontics, will lecture on "Clinical Problems Associated with the Selection and Application of Biomechanics of Pre-adjusted/Pre-Angulated Appliances in the Orthodontic Treatment of Malocclusion." A nominal registration fee will be charged which is inclusive of buffet lunch, snacks and certificate of attendance. The early registration deadline is June 20. Attendance is limited. For particulars call 551-4679 and 551-4680.

Ateneo Law homecoming

THE ATENEO de Manila College of Law, in its 61st year, is celebrating the annual alumni homecoming on June 27 at the NBC Tent in Bonifacio Global City. This year's highlight is the honoring of the Silver (1978), Ruby (1963) and the Golden batches (1953) of the Ateneo de Manila Law School. The golden jubilarians are led by Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. The 2003 alumni homecoming is hosted by the Ateneo de Manila College of Law class of 1979 chaired by Rep. Neptali M. Gonzales II. The other class 1979 officers include DILG Undersecretary Marius P. Corpus, Pag-Ibig Fund VP Vilma Flores, lawyer Epimaco R. Magpantay, Deputy Executive Secretary Jose T. Tale, lawyers George C. Nograles and Gregorio M. Batiller Jr., Tidcorp VP Ma. Rosario M. Demigillo and lawyer Rodolfo V. Romero. It is the commitment of the host class, through the assistance of support organizations such as the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, PLDT, NBC Tent, San Miguel Corp. and Pagcor, to help in the further improvement of the law school in producing outstanding lawyers of the land. Dance music will be provided by The Spirit of '67. Ticket reservations are available through the secretariat at 852-7505 or 0916-4110191. Look for Gigi Esteban.

Ford marks 100th year

A FORD GT is shown during opening ceremonies for Ford's centennial celebration June 12 in Dearborn. AFP

DEARBORN, Michigan—When all but one of Henry Ford's direct living descendants gather in coming days to celebrate the founding 100 years ago of the Ford Motor Co., it will be hard to mask the air of despair hanging over Detroit.

The anniversary on June 16 will mark the largest gathering ever for the first family of the US automobile industry, and is likely to be remembered for more than just a big celebration of the past. The company's future is in the balance.

The centennial comes at a time when the auto industry is adding capacity faster than customers, a fact chair and chief executive Bill Ford Jr. knows will determine how the world's No. 2 automaker survives, along with the family's say in running it.

There are bigger family-controlled corporations (Wal-Mart Stores Inc. is the biggest), and older ones (Kongo Gumi, a Japanese building company, was founded in 578). And there are other family-run automakers (Peugeot, Fiat, BMW and Hyundai).

But the Ford family's longevity at the helm of a company its size is remarkable. Only 3 percent or 4 percent of families manage to hold onto a company's power beyond the third generation, and many see their control dissipate once they sell shares to the public.

Sixty family members are expected to attend the celebrations, which began on Thursday and culminate Monday.

The Fords are "beginning to defy some of the basic kinds of records of other family businesses, and that's a compliment to the family," said William T. O'Hara, executive director of Bryant College's Institute for Family Enterprise. "They're doing something very right to create that climate for perpetuation."

If Henry Ford had his way, the company would have stayed in the family. He blamed the failure of some early competitors on stockholder meddling, and was determined to minimize the role of those he called "parasites."

After founding the company with 11 investors in 1903, Henry Ford bought out the largest investor a few years later and by 1919 talked the rest into selling—thanks in part to his threat to start another automaker and knock off Ford.

When Edsel Ford, Henry's son, died in 1943 he had never taken full control. Only after Edsel's widow threatened to sell her shares and push the family out of control did Henry cede power in 1945 to his grandson, 28-year-old Henry Ford II.

"Hank the Deuce," as he was known for the next three decades, modernized Ford. He also took the company public in 1956 with a two-tiered stock system—one class for regular shareholders, and Class B shares for family members who control 40 percent of the shareholder vote.

Only family members can buy Class B shares, but they can be converted into regular shares and sold. As best as the Fords can tell, no family member has sold a Class B share since the early 1980s.

The centennial comes at an inopportune time for Ford, which has stumbled in the 21st century. Boardroom turmoil and the Firestone tire recall helped knock the company off balance, with losses of $6.4 billion in the last two years.

Ford has surpassed its profit targets so far this year, but there is still doubt on Wall Street that the company can meet its goal of $7 billion in annual profits by mid-decade.

Saul Rubin, an industry analyst for UBS Warburg, said recently that with billions in pension and health-care obligations, the Big Three automakers could eventually face financial ruin if today's trends continue unabated.

Bill Ford maintains the company is on track, and by sticking to basics such as cost-cutting, it will return to health. He said he has begun to think about what kind of company Ford should be in several years, by which time Toyota Motor Corp. may be challenging Ford for its slot as the world's second-largest automaker.

Outside of Bill Ford Jr., the only other Ford in the company's executive ranks is Elena Ford, the first fifth-generation family member to work there. *Reuters*

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BUSINESS*Monday*

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Going about the Father's business via printed words

WHEN Ramon Rocha III was asked to fill in the CEO post at OMF Literature Inc., he did not give an immediate response. After all, he was in the manufacturing business then, and knew close to nothing about publishing.

He took some time to think about the matter and consulted with people he respected. And, more importantly, he sought the will of his heavenly Father. For by becoming CEO of OMF Lit, he would be doing God's work and Ramon knew that only with God's approval will he prosper.

Ramon was aware of the unique heritage of OMF Literature, which traces its roots to the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF), formerly known as the China Inland Mission. As the name implies, OMF was a group of missionaries spreading the Christian message within China. But when that Communist nation closed its borders to Western influence, all mission work was curtailed and foreign missionaries were expelled. Undaunted, OMF explored non-traditional means by which to get the Gospel across barbed wires and the Great Wall. Some of OMF's missionaries who went to the Philippines discovered that the printed word was one such powerful and effective tool. Thus, was born the publishing arm of OMF, which later became a distinct corporate personality as OMF Literature Inc.

After much deliberation and prayer, Ramon accepted the post. OMF Lit is one of the largest publishers of evangelical Christian literature in Asia. Now on its 46th year in publishing, OMF Lit has produced quality reading materials, not only for the Filipinos but also for export to countries like Canada, US, Netherlands, UK, Germany, Italy, Zambia, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand.

Locally, OMF Lit titles have been made available to the public for wholesale at their bookstores/showrooms at Boni Avenue in Mandaluyong and in Cebu City, and for retail at Christian bookstores nationwide, as well as Powerbooks and all branches of National Book Stores.

For the last six years since he joined OMF Lit, Ramon has led his team towards novel and challenging ventures like the Hiyas Children's Collection, inspirational gift books and leadership books. OMF Lit has also maintained its backlist of almost 500 titles on Christian growth and daily living, family issues as well as church and missions. Recently, OMF Lit has figured in exciting news as Gracia Burnham's book, 'In the Presence of My Enemies', stirred a lot of controversy locally. In partnership with Tyndale House Publishers Inc. for over 40 years, OMF Lit is presently the exclusive Philippine distributor of the book, which more than the controversy, speaks of God's grace in the most difficult of trials.

Sharing some business principles

While Ramon attributes the continuing success of OMF Lit to God, he also cites some basic business principles that contribute to the company's dynamic performance. These principles are included in his article, The Christian Publisher: Strong in the Storm for the Media Associates International's booklet, Expand Your Litt-World.

First, he says, a company needs a defined direction. He recommends being faithful to a well-written and focused mission statement. Adhering to this mission statement keeps a company on track. "It is a constant challenge for us to drop all activities that don't contribute to this mission statement," says Ramon.

Next, he stresses the importance of producing better products, both in content and in form. OMF Lit titles are accepted across a wide spectrum of denominations and persuasions, from Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Charismatics, Evangelicals, Fundamentalists, Calvinists, and Armenians. In its effort to address the needs of Filipino readers, OMF Lit is constantly on the lookout for good books to publish—whether written by local authors or by buying rights to foreign books. Likewise, there have been continued improvements on book cover designs, layout, paper and printing standards. "Get away from a 'this will be OK' mentality," Ramon advises. "If you have to reject a whole lot of printing, go ahead and reject it. Reject poor quality printing." It pays to be firm with maintaining these standards. OMF Lit has established a reputation in the Philippine printing industry as a quality publisher.

A company would also do well to have a properly managed inventory. While there is no such thing as zero losses, the key is to minimize those losses.

Maintaining strong finances is crucial. Apart from managing receivables well and having positive cash flow, it is wise to break free from the bondage of debt. "By God's grace, other than our actual trade payables, OMF Literature is loan-free," Ramon remarks.

He also advocates the use of appropriate technology to complement corporate efforts. "We are into the 21st century and there is no escaping the internet, computers, cell phones, PDAs, digital cameras, LCD projectors and e-books. Use what is appropriate and only what you can afford. Investing in technology is also investing in the future. The first e-book in the Philippines is our children's book entitled, "Nang Maghasik ng Lagim si Lolit Lamok."

Calculated risks

How much of a risk-taker is Ramon as a CEO? He believes that part of business leadership is taking calculated risks, but with a positive attitude. He cautions however that the risks should not be irresponsible. "Conduct all necessary research, analysis and evaluation, study all angles, then go for it. And pray really hard."

Ramon is backed up by a management team committed to ministry and excellence. For them, corporate leadership is pivotal in bringing out the best in every OMF Lit employee. Because of this, management not only gives direction but also inspiration, encouragement, and full support to the staff.

If Ramon were to draw an image that will represent OMF Literature, what would it be? According to him, "Our publishing house is like a lighthouse ... As the strong winds blow, and the storms rage, we stand firm and continue to beam that saving light ... We flash that light and that light is our Lord Jesus and his Word ... The fuel that we use to build the light is the steady stream of books and booklets that we publish ... In the midst of the storm, our readers are afraid and anxious, but as they see the light that we flash from our lighthouse, they are comforted and assured."

ROCHA III

Matapang. Malakas. Machong Macho ito! Ibang klaseng Barako... Now in the Market!

by: Kawasaki Motors (Phils.) Corporation

Sa pangharabas... matibay. Sa pang-araw-araw na hanapbuhay... maasahan. It's the all new motorcycle for the hard-driving, hard-working Filipino...mula sa Kawasaki. Aptly dubbed Barako because of its heavy- duty and powerful engine, ito na nga ang "kapartner at kabalikat ng Pinoy sa paghahanapbuhay."

"We designed it exclusively for the Philippine market, keeping in mind the challenging road conditions, unique Filipino style, needs and usage." says Mr. Rodel I. Pablo, Kawasaki Motors General Manager for Marketing.

Barako is the only motorcycle with the most powerful engine in its class. Highly variable ang power and torque sa wide range of engine RPM pero highly efficient at economical. Mataas ang efficiency rating kaya mas mababa ang operating cost for the user kaya mas profitable ang gamit. Environmental friendly pa ang engine ng Barako, designed in compliance sa stringent regulations ng Philippine Clean Air Act.

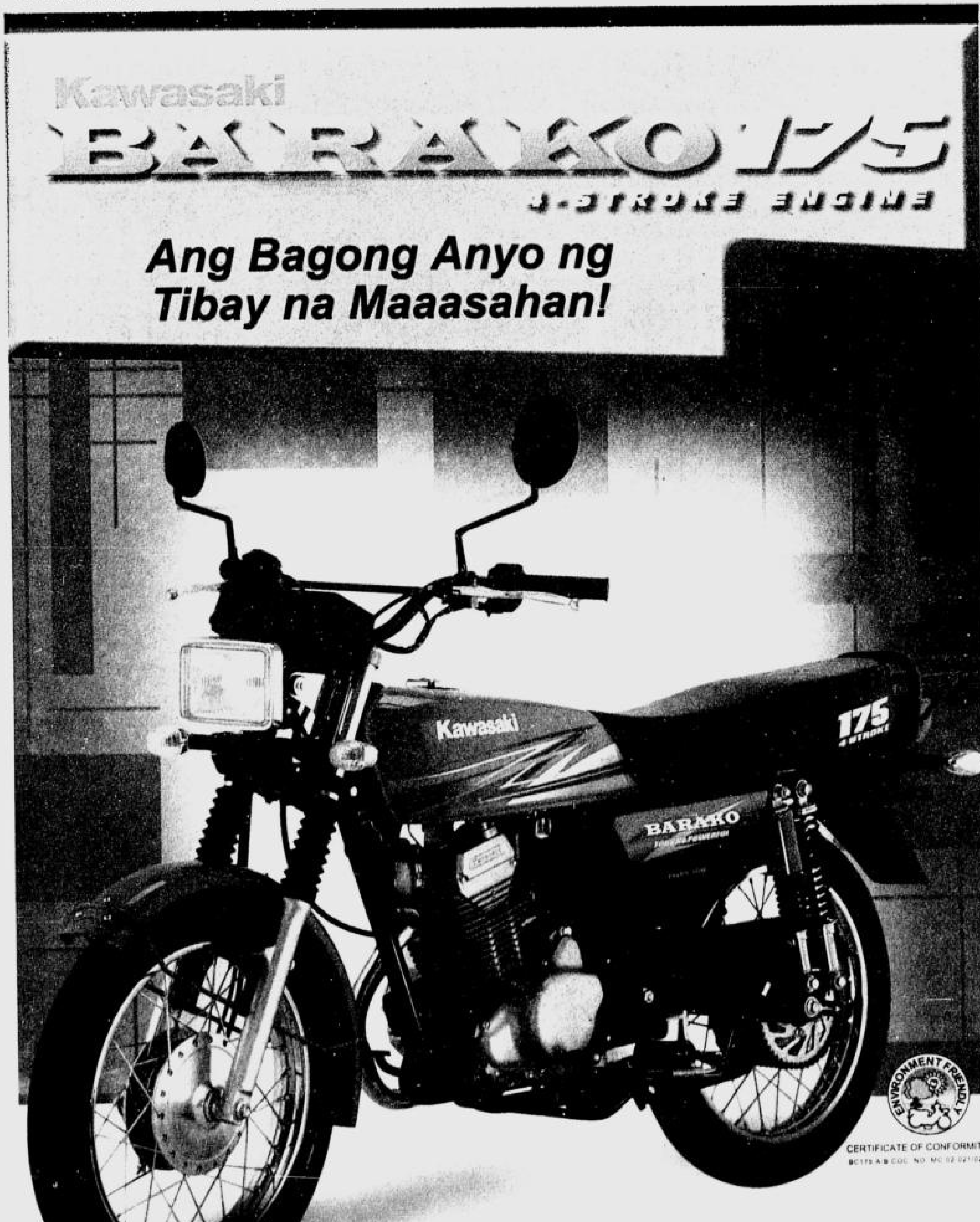
Ang bagong Barako ay may high ground clearance, making it highly suitable for Philippine road conditions. At mas malaki ang tire size, for safe traction on higher ground and terrain.

Ang frame ng Barako ay gawa sa high tensile steel. Matibay at madaling i-adapt for tricycle usage. Highly maneuverable ang steering angle, kaya angkop na angkop sa makikipot at masisikip na kalye.

Added value ang long seat ng Barako. Di na kailangang i-modify at may thick seat padding para kumportableng-kumportable ang mga pasahero. At ang new rectangular headlight ay kaakit-akit tignan. Powered ito by a 12 V system para mas maliwanag sa gabi at ang lamp ng Barako ay securely mounted with vibration dampers.

Siksik sa maraming practical na features. Wide ang range of applications. Motorsiklong tatak Barako! Kakaiba nga naman ito.

Pampasada, pang-negosyo...at pangharabas sa kahit na anong sulok ng Pinas, ito na nga ang best choice in the market today.

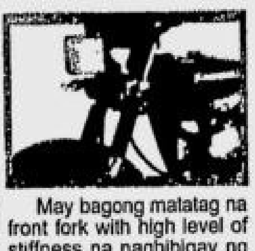


Maasahan at matibay na 175 cc, air-cooled, 4-stroke, single cylinder SOHC engine. Nagbibigay ng malakas na hatak at mas matipid sa gasolina. Mahusay ang performance at hindi nakakasama sa kapaligiran at kalikasan.

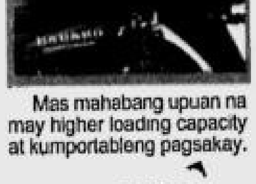
May bagong sportier-look ang tail lamp na dinagdagan ng reflector sa ibaba na nagdadagdag ng visibility para sa ligtas na pagmamaneho. Mayroon din itong vibration damper na nakakapagpabawas ng mararamdamang tagtag sa kahit anong uri ng daan.

May dalawang (2) paraan ng pagstart ng makina, kick at electric (para sa BC 175B lamang) na may "ADVANCER" na nagpapadali ng siguradong pagpapaandar.

Moderno at malakas ang rectangular headlamp na may kasamang turn signal lights na may clear lenses at amber bulbs para sa mas sporty na style at visibility.



May bagong matatag na front fork with high level of stiffness na nagbibigay ng smoother ride, greater road holding at higher ground clearance.



Mas mahabang upuan na may higher loading capacity at kumportableng pagsakay.

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BARAKO Ang bagong anyo ng tibay na maaasahan

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor **Louie C. Camino**

MTRCB to monitor all noon shows for vulgarity

Censors issue 'a strong warning' to De Leon and the other hosts of 'Eat Bulaga'

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE MOVIE and Television Review and Classification Board has warned comedian Joey de Leon of GMA 7's "Eat Bulaga" against using sexually explicit jokes to avoid being suspended for vulgarity.

MTRCB Chair Marissa Laguardia told INQUIRER Entertainment on Saturday that she recently issued "a strong warning" to De Leon, as well as to the other hosts of the popular noontime variety show.

"Starting next week (June 16), the MTRCB will closely monitor all channels with noontime shows," declared Laguardia.

The warning to "Eat Bulaga" was revealed after Willie Revillame and John Estrada were suspended for one week by ABS-CBN management for conduct unbecoming and use of inappropriate language on the network's own noontime show "Masayang Tanghali Bayan."

The suspension, according to ABS-CBN, was prompted by the complaints the network received from televiewers and from the MTRCB against Revillame and Estrada.

According to "Eat Bulaga" executive producer Malou Choa-Fagar, the GMA 7 show's hosts had received the MTRCB warning long before ABS-CBN announced the suspension of Estrada and Revillame.

"We submitted taped episodes to the board (MTRCB) last May," Choa-Fagar said. "They reviewed the VHS tapes and didn't find anything offensive."

SUSPENDED hosts Revillame (left) and Estrada (right) joke around with co-host Santiago and Aubrey Miles in file photo.

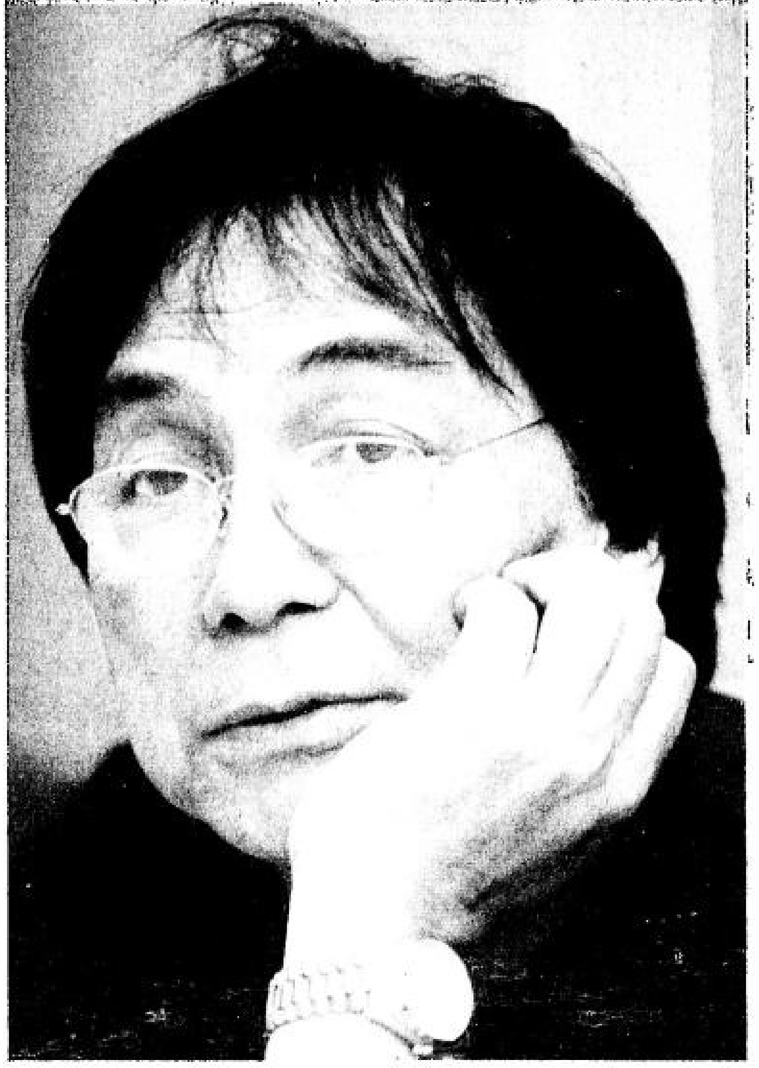
She pointed out that there is a big difference between the hosting styles of Revillame and Estrada and of De Leon and his "Eat Bulaga" co-host Vic Sotto.

"Joey and Vic use their brains before cracking jokes so as not to offend the sensibilities of their viewers," she said, "while some of the hosts of other networks are just gross."

Choa-Fagar added that as a producer, she would always call the attention of the show hosts whenever she felt that "they go overboard."

"The hosts don't run the show but are merely frontliners," she explained. "It is the responsibility of the show's producers to look after the hosts."

Maloli Manalastas, ABS-CBN vice president for corporate affairs, said the suspension of Estrada and Revillame from June 16 to June 21 was "to give them the time and opportunity to re-orient themselves" with ABS-CBN guidelines as provided in their talent agreements with the network.


JOEY DE LEON and co-host Vic Sotto use their brains before cracking no-brainer jokes, says show producer.

She said the dialogue between ABS-CBN management and the MTRCB is ongoing "because we value the concern of our public, including viewers and government agencies like the MTRCB."

Shortly after news of their suspension was reported, Revillame announced that he would be spending his "forced" vacation in Las Vegas to tape his weekly wish-oriented show "Willingly Yours."

Estrada said he would be vacationing in Zamboanga. He is believed to be joining his girlfriend Vanessa del Bianca, who is back from Canada.

In 1999, the network also suspended Revillame, Estrada and co-host Randy Santiago, also for their crass jokes and vulgar behavior, and their inappropriate treatment of contestants in the "Calendar Girl" segment of the show.

The suspension came following two warnings from the MTRCB.

It eventually led to the 20-day suspension of "MTB" and to Revillame's resignation as an ABS-CBN talent.

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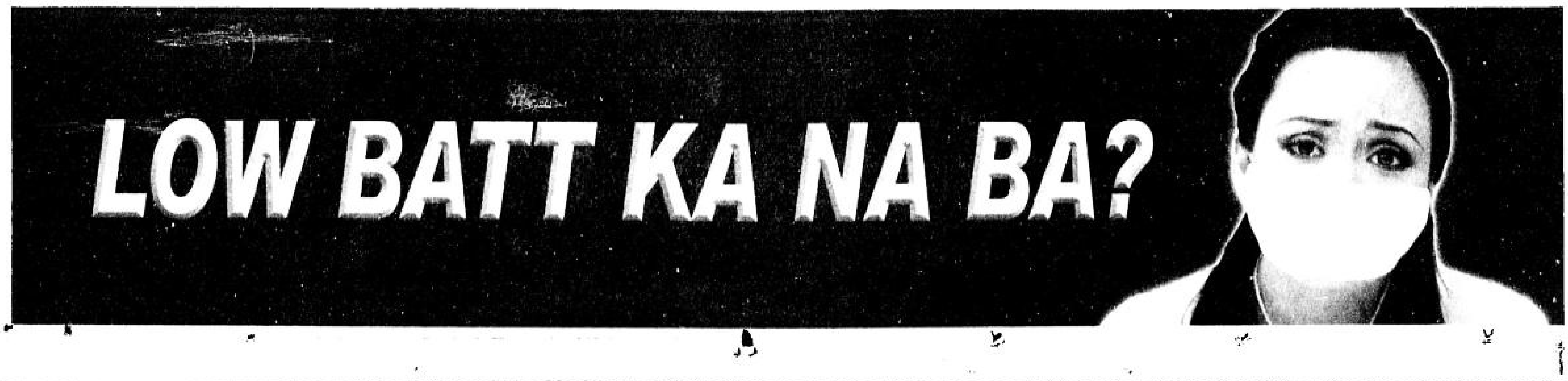

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2 PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA	2 HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS	2 PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA 11:00, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA 12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7:00, 9:15, 11:30	2 ANG HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
3 BERTUD NG PUTIK	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 BRUCE ALMIGHTY 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Onstage REX RELOADED - AN EVENING WITH REX NAVARETE July 1 - 8:00 pm	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 FRIDA 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30	3 BRUCE ALMIGHTY
4 ANG HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA	4 WHO IS CLETIS TOUT?		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 DARKNESS FALLS 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	4 SANIB
	5 SANIB		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30	5 DARKNESS FALLS
	6 PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA			
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SM CITY CEBU

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1	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
2	AGENT CODY BANKS
3	SANIB
4	BERTUD NG PUTIK
5	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
6	ANG TANGING INA
7	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
8	DARKNESS FALLS

SM CITY ILOILO

3209422

1	DARKNESS FALLS
2	CLOSED
3	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
4	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
5	AGENT CODY BANKS
6	ANG TANGING INA
7	CLOSED
8	SANIB

SM CITY PAMPANGA

7128015

1	ANG TANGING INA
2	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
3	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
4	SANIB
5	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
6	BERTUD NG PUTIK

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT

8294975

1	SANIB
2	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
3	BERTUD NG PUTIK
4	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN

2514302

1	SANIB
2	BERTUD NG PUTIK
3	ALAB NG LAHI
4	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA

SM CITY DAVAO

2976998

1	DARKNESS FALLS
2	SANIB
3	BERTUD NG PUTIK
4	ANG TANGING INA
5	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
6	BRUCE ALMIGHTY

SM BICUTAN

776-3055

1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
2	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
3	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
4	SANIB

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

850-2884

1	SO CLOSE
2	ANG TANGING INA
3	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
4	WHAT A GIRL WANTS

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1	PANGARAP KO AY IBIGIN KA 11:00 MF/11:20/1:40/4:00/6:20/8:40/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:50 END
2	BRUCE ALMIGHTY 11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/ 10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:45 END

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2	HULING BIRHEN
3	MATRIX
4	THE GURO
5	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA
6	DARKNESS FALLS
7	SANIB
8	BERTUD NG PUTIK
9	ALAB NG HAHI
10	BALIKATAN

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2	SANIB
3	BERTUD NG PUTIK
4	HULING BIRHEN
5	ALAB NG LAHI
6	BALIKATAN
7	BERTUD NG PUTIK

Metro East - Marcos hway

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1	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
2	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA
3	BALIKATAN
4	ALAB NG LAHI
5	DARKNESS FALLS
6	HULING BIRHEN
7	SANIB
8	BERTUD NG PUTIK

Novaliches

935- 3229 - 30

1	DARKNESS FALLS
2	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA
3	BALIKATAN
4	ALAB NG LAHI
5	HULING BIRHEN
6	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
7	SANIB
8	BERTUD NG PUTIK

Malabon Citisquare

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1	BALIKATAN
2	ALAB NG LAHI
3	HULING BIRHEN
4	BERTUD NG PUTIK

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(045)961-5270

1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
2	HULING BIRHEN
3	BALIKATAN
4	SANIB
5	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA
6	ALAB NG LAHI

Imus

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1	SANIB
2	HULING BIRHEN
3	BERTUD NG PUTIK
4	BALIKATAN
5	ALAB NG LAHI
6	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA

Sta. Rosa Laguna

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2	SANIB
3	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA
4	ALAB NG LAHI
5	HULING BIRHEN

Bacolod

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1	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
2	ANG TANGING INA
3	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA
4	DARKNESS FALLS
5	WHAT A GIRL WANT
6	DAYO

Iloilo

336- 8077 - 78

1	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
2	AGENT CODY BANKS
3	DARKNESS FALLS
4	ANG TANGING INA
5	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA
6	SANIB

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Lead singer leaves Mojofly 'to study'

GOING SOLO. Kitchie Nadal. OZ MENDOZA

By Anne Luisa Villarico

KITCHIE Nadal, front woman of the Mojofly band, has decided to leave the band after four years so she can concentrate on her studies.

Mojofly's gig at Robinson's Cainta last Saturday, June 14, was Nadal's last as the band's vocalist.

"This is one of the best decisions I've ever made," she told INQUIRER Entertainment. "I don't think I'll eat my words."

Nadal, 22, said she decided to devote more time to school because it became more difficult to juggle academics and singing in the band. She said that since the band's gigs and practice sessions usually last past midnight, she hardly had time to prepare for school the next day.

"I had to file a leave of absence from school when I was with Mojofly, or I did not take full-load units," she said.

Nadal is a 4th year Psychology major at De La Salle University.

"I've no concrete plans yet," she said of her life after college. "But I know whatever I do will have a lot to do with my course."

She said her band mates "had anticipated" her leaving the group.

"I didn't surprise them," she said. "They knew even before that school was really my priority."

She said she told them about her plan to quit as early as January and that her band mates understood her decision.

"Some of my friends said I should stay with the group," she said. "But later I realized that not all battles should be fought. Sometimes it's better to concede."

Asked about her alleged rift with Mojofly bassist Ricci Gurango, Nadal only said, "Okay *lang naman kami.*

What's next?

"There will still be Mojofly, they will still be recording the third album," she added.

She said she doesn't know who will take her place as lead singer of Mojofly. "Ricci is the backbone (of the group)," she said. "I don't think it would be a problem to find another vocalist."

She added, without elaborating: "You cannot give what you don't have so it's not selfish to focus on myself."

"It's now time to relax and nurture myself," Nadal said. "I've been doing my own thing, writing my own songs. No commitments."

And no pressure, too, she said. "Unlike before (when I was still in Mojofly), I had to know what's happening in the music scene," she said.

SINGING happy tunes, with bassist Ricci Gurango.

As the cliché goes, when a door closes, a window opens. ABS-CBN has tapped Nadal to be one of the performers in what could be the biggest concert tour of the year. She will be performing along with Barbie's Cradle, Vina Morales, Parokya ni Edgar, Moonstar 88 and Salbakuta on June 21 in Tacloban; July 4, Cebu; July 12, Naga; July 25, Bacolod; July 26, Iloilo; and Aug. 2, Metro Manila.

The event is supported by MYX, Studio 23, MOR FM and dwRR 101. 9.

Mojofly started with Nadal as lead singer, Gurango on bass, Jun-Jun Regalado on drums and Raymund Golamco on guitar. A few months after recording their second album ("A Million Stories"), Golamco left for business reasons.

Mojofly's first album, "Birthday," carried the hit singles "Minamalas," "Pagkakamali" and "Another Day."

Will Nadal, who is touted to be as the next Sampaguita, go solo?

"I'll just play it by ear," she replied with a smile.

CHARLIE'S ANGELS
FULL THROTTLE

SM
SUPERMALLS
ACTIVITIES

CHARLIE'S ANGELS GALLERY OF ADVENTURES EXHIBIT
- Reminisce and enjoy this travelling exhibit that features the cool and exciting adventures and memorabilias of the Angels.

DATES/MALLS TIME - 10am - 8pm
June 16 - 17 --- Manila
June 24 - 25 --- Megamall
June 26 --- Bacoor
June 27 --- Sta. Mesa
June 29 - 30 --- Pampanga
July 4 --- Fairview
July 9 --- Sucat
July 10 - 11 --- North Edsa

FULL THROTTLE FASHION FUSION
- A series of fashion shows showcasing CA2 merchandise together with other products that create and personify the Charlie's Angels image.

DATES/MALLS TIME - 4 pm
June 18 --- Davao
June 20 --- Southmall
June 21 --- Bacoor
June 22 --- Fairview
June 25 --- Megamall
June 27 --- Sta. Mesa
June 28 --- Bicutan
June 29 --- Pampanga
July 6 --- Manila
July 8 --- Cagayan de Oro
July 12 --- Sucat
July 13 --- North Edsa
July 14 --- Iloilo
July 15 --- Cebu

CHARLIE'S ANGELS FUN TRAINING ACADEMY
- Target shooting arena and interactive demos on self defense (taekwondo, aikido, and other martial arts) and more body buffing demos (taebo & aerobics) where participants can enjoy fun training Charlie's Angels way.

DATES/MALLS TIME - 10am - 8pm
June 23 - 24 --- Megamall
July 1 & 2 --- Pampanga
July 4 --- Fairview
July 5 --- Bicutan
July 10 & 11 --- North Edsa
* Demos start at 3pm to 5pm

THE CHARLIE'S ANGELS STREET PARTY
- Experience and personify the Angels' look - stylish, chic and feminine through a Grand Fashion Show with bands, and games & surprises.

June 25 • 9:00pm @ The Megastrip

in cooperation with:
SMART Buddy GSM Pre-paid

SHOWING AT ALL SM CINEMAS JUNE 27
Not yet rated by the MTRCB

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SM SUPERMALLS
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SM CITY BICUTAN · SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT · SM SOUTHMALL LAS PIÑAS · SM CITY BACOOR
SM CITY PAMPANGA · SM CITY CEBU · SM CITY ILOILO · SM CITY DAVAO · SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

MAY CHARGER KA BA?

Free tickets to L.A. won in MTV Movies bash

SHOW TIME

MOVIE screenings, music, games, fortune telling, foot spa, tattooing, face painting were mixed together to make up one hot brew at The Fort—all for free, in "The MTV Movie Awards Madness."

The bash began with the showing of "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" and "Spiderman," followed by "Triple XXX," "8 Mile" and finally, on the third weekend, "The Ring" last May 23.

The event drummed up hype over this year's MTV Movie Awards night at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. Globe Gentxt held a promo where winners Zelyn Ramos, Teresa Tinamisan, Matilde Loyola and Arnie Gil Hordejan won a free trip each to L.A. Globe Gentxt's brand manager Chooey Velayo announced the winners.

Hosting the event at The Fort were newly-crowned MTV VJs Patty Laurel and Johan Ekedum, with Velcro providing the sounds.

The 2003 MTV Movie Awards was shown on MTV Philippines (Channel 41) during the weekend.

The 2003 MTV Movie Awards was presented by Globe Gentxt.

PRESENTER Globe Gentxt's Chooey Velayo and new VJs Johan Ekedum and Patty Laurel (right and second from right) announce winners Arnie Gil Hordejan, Zelyn Ramos, Teresa Tinamisan and Matilde Loyola.

JERICHO Rosales

Jericho now sells tuna

NO, JERICHO Rosales is not hawking them. He is the new endorser of 555 Tuna.

In the new 555 Tuna commercial, which was launched last June 8 on the Sunday noontime show "Asap," Jericho also sings the jingle, a Gen-X version of the Maria Cafra rock classic, "Problema na Naman."

"He has a fun-loving personality and his image is very clean," says Ayet Evangelista, group product manager of Century Canning Corp., explaining the company's choice of Echo. "His fun-loving personality very well fits into the 555 Tuna personality."

Echo is on two TV shows, the daily soap opera "Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas" and "Asap." He is also starring in the remake of the marilou Diaz-Abaya movie "Moral 2003."

Jericho is also into sports, like surfing.

TRIUMPH International (Philippines) Inc. honored its top dealers in "Serenata 2003" last April 12 at Peninsula Manila's Rigodon Ballroom. Inspired by Broadway, the affair was highlighted by excerpts from musicals performed by Pinky Marquez, Isay Alvarez, Bimbo Cerrudo, tenor Nolyn Cabahug and Robert Seña. Pilates advocate Plinky Recto and Triumph's area sales supervisor for Mindanao Mar Cavan were the hosts. Marketing sales director Gary Quemado (extreme left) and senior managing director Alfredo Escueta (extreme right) present the awards to (from left) Rebecca Vibora, Adelaida Yalung and Fe Badilles.

Bantay Bata bingo

"PA-BINGO Para sa Mga Bata" by Bantay Bata 163 will be held on June 22 at 1 p.m. at the World Trade Center along Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City, for the benefit of Children's Village, Bantay Bata 163, and Mission Angels, which sponsors missionary activities and recollections.

Prizes include the grand prize of P1 million and three cars.

For information, call Kate, Cynthia or Mike at 411-0856, 415-6626, 415-6625 or 925-5255.

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CINEMA
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

FRIDA R18 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	AGENT CODY BANKS PG13 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	TANGING INA GP 12:20, 2:40, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00
DARKNESS FALLS PG13 12:10, 2:05, 4:00, 5:55	SANIB PG13 1:00, 3:10, 5:20	BRUCE ALMIGHTY PG13 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 1:10

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CINEMA 2
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11:40, 1:55, 4:10, 6:25, 8:40
R18
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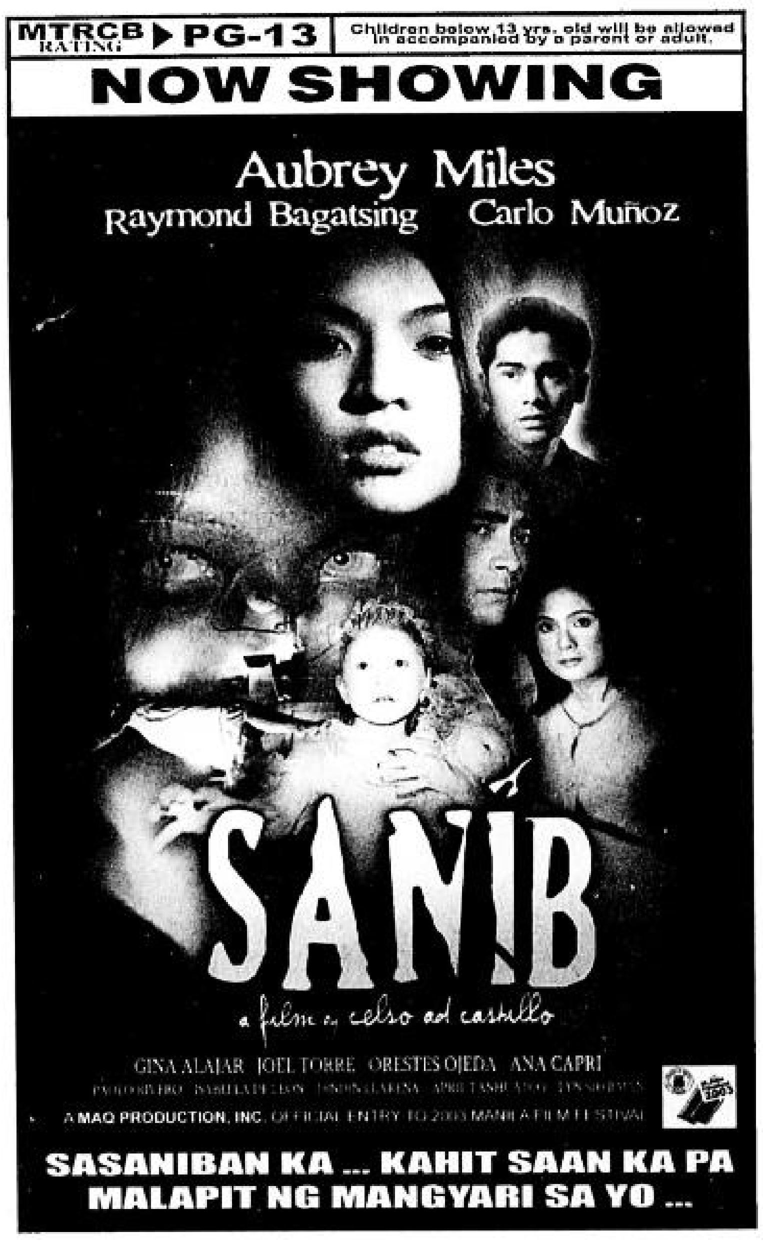
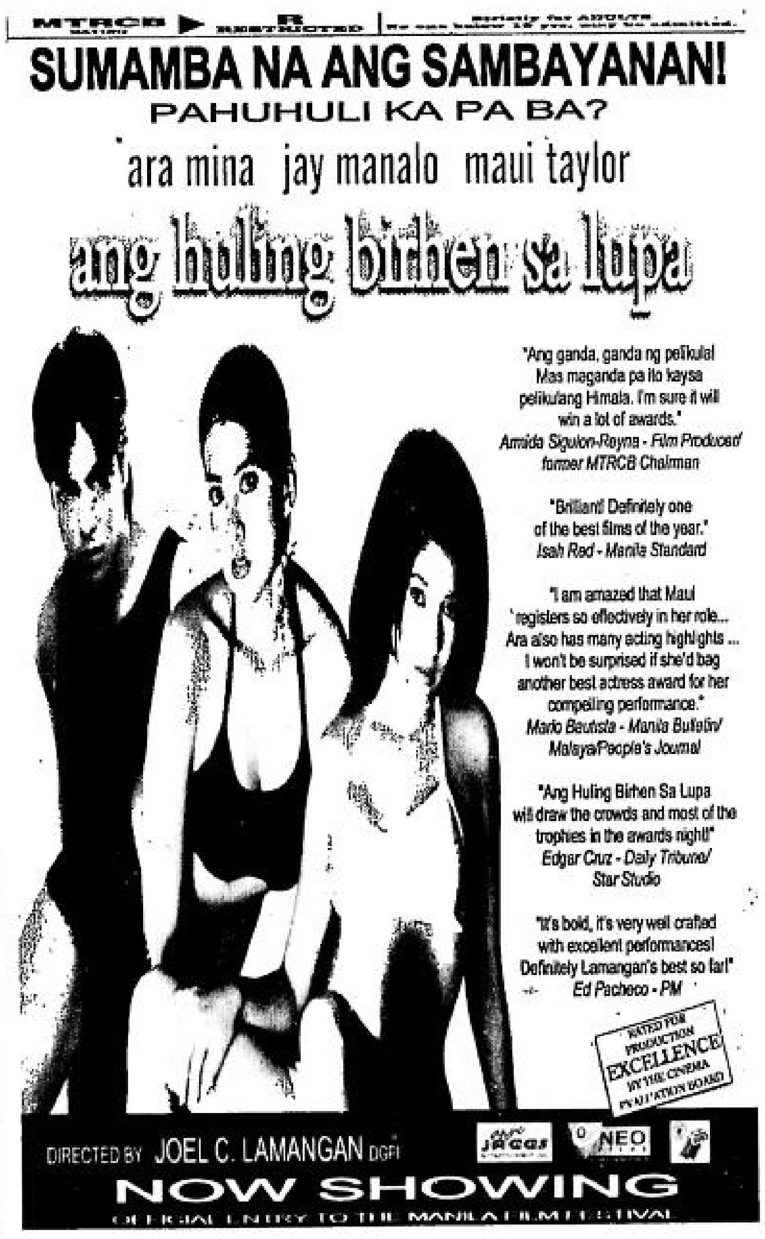
MUSIC MUSEUM
JUNE 19 2003 "CHANGE A LIFE" (LANI MISALUCHA) 8:30PM
JUNE 28 2003 N I N A "HEAVEN SENT" 8:00PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635



MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
NOW SHOWING
Aubrey Miles
Raymond Bagatsing Carlo Muñoz
SANIB
a film by celso ad castillo
GINA ALAJAR JOEL TORRE ORESTES OJEDA ANA CAPRI
A MAQ PRODUCTION, INC. OFFICIAL ENTRY TO 2003 MANILA FILM FESTIVAL
SASANIBAN KA ... KAHIT SAAN KA PA MALAPIT NG MANGYARI SA YO ...



MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED
SUMAMBA NA ANG SAMBAYANAN!
PAHUHULI KA PA BA?
ara mina jay manalo maui taylor
ang huling birhen sa lupa
"Ang ganda, ganda ng pelikula! Mas maganda pa ito kaysa pelikulang Himala. I'm sure it will win a lot of awards."
Armida Siguion-Reyna - Film Producer/ former MTRCB Chairman
"Brilliant! Definitely one of the best films of the year."
Isah Red - Manila Standard
"I am amazed that Maui registers so effectively in her role... Ara also has many acting highlights ... I won't be surprised if she'd bag another best actress award for her compelling performance."
Mario Bautista - Manila Bulletin/ Malaya/People's Journal
"Ang Huling Birhen Sa Lupa will draw the crowds and most of the trophies in the awards night!"
Edgar Cruz - Daily Tribune/ Star Studio
"It's bold, it's very well crafted with excellent performances! Definitely Lamangan's best so far!"
Ed Pacheco - PM
RATED FOR PRODUCTION EXCELLENCE BY THE CINEMA EVALUATION BOARD
DIRECTED BY JOEL C. LAMANGAN DGPI
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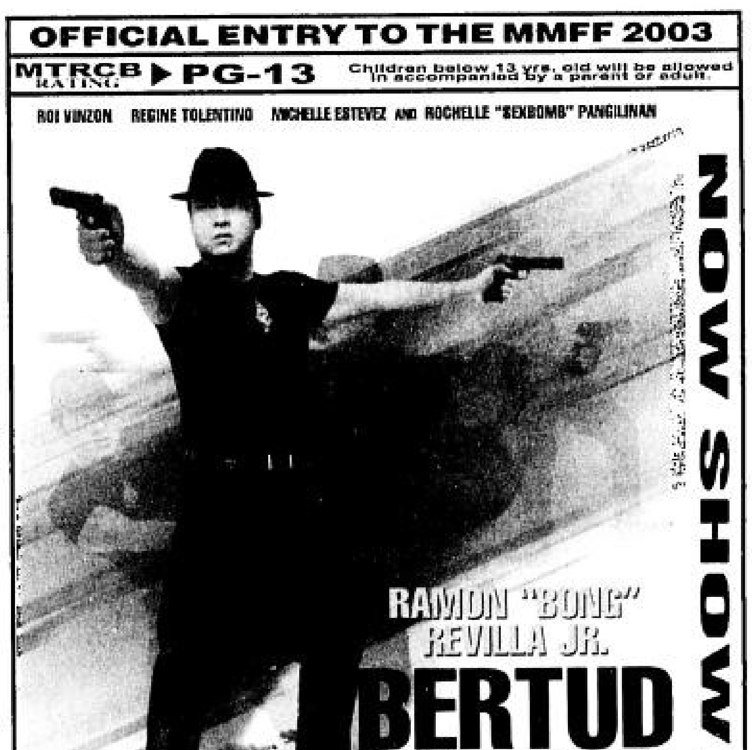
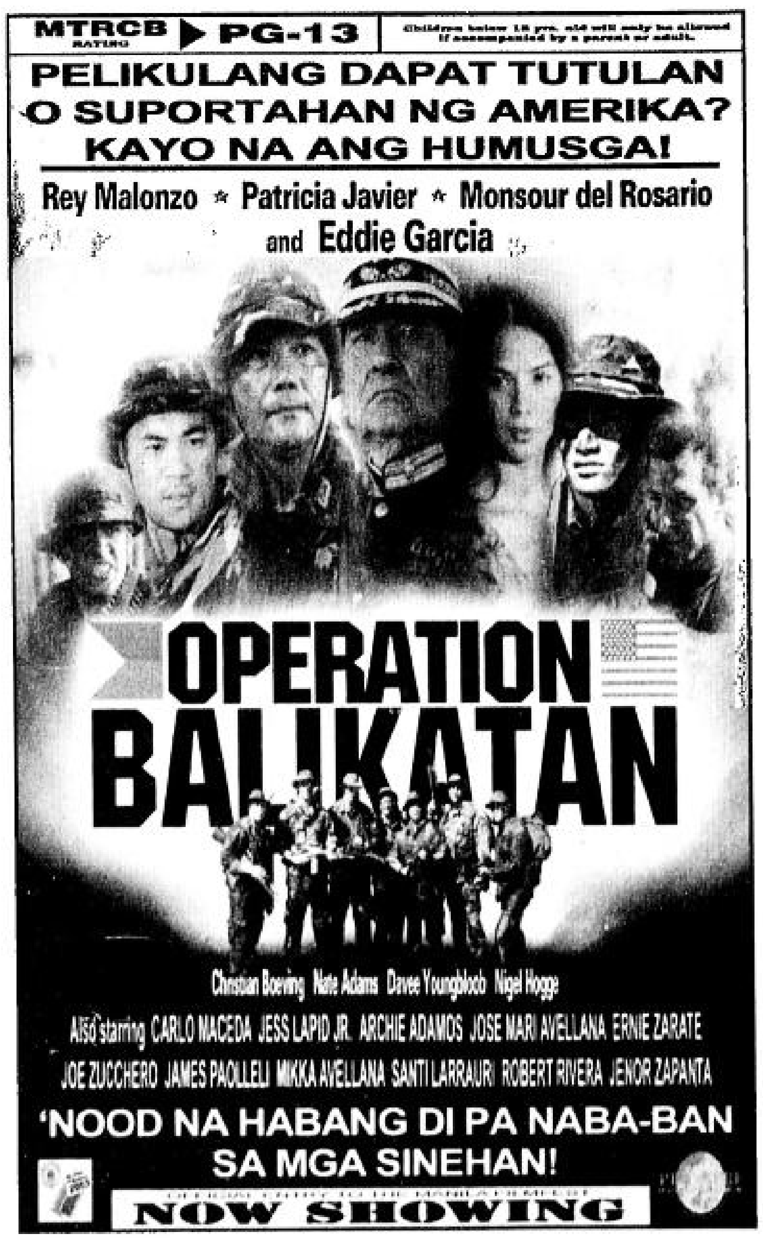
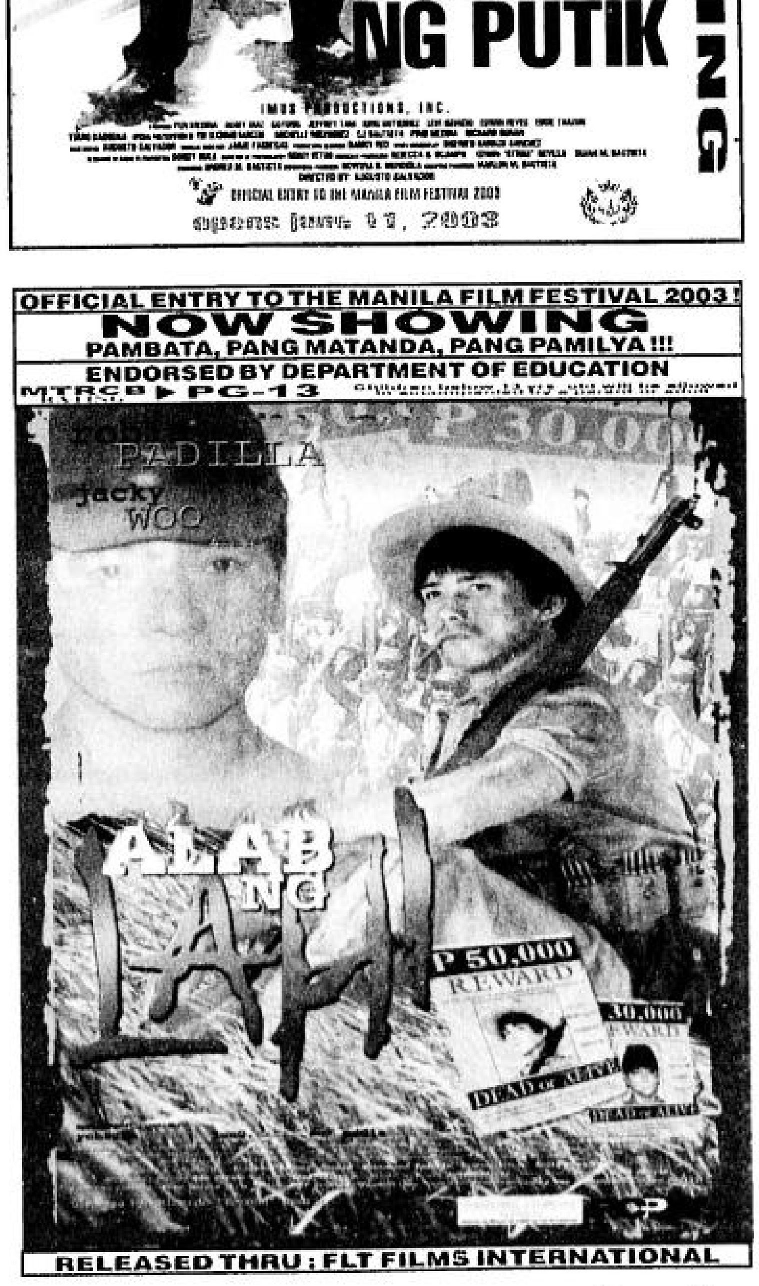


OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE MMFF 2003
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
ROI VINZON REGINE TOLENTINO MICHELLE ESTEVEZ AND ROCHELLE "SEXBOMB" PANGILINAN
RAMON "BONG" REVILLA JR.
BERTUD NG PUTIK
IMUS PRODUCTIONS, INC.
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2003
NOW SHOWING

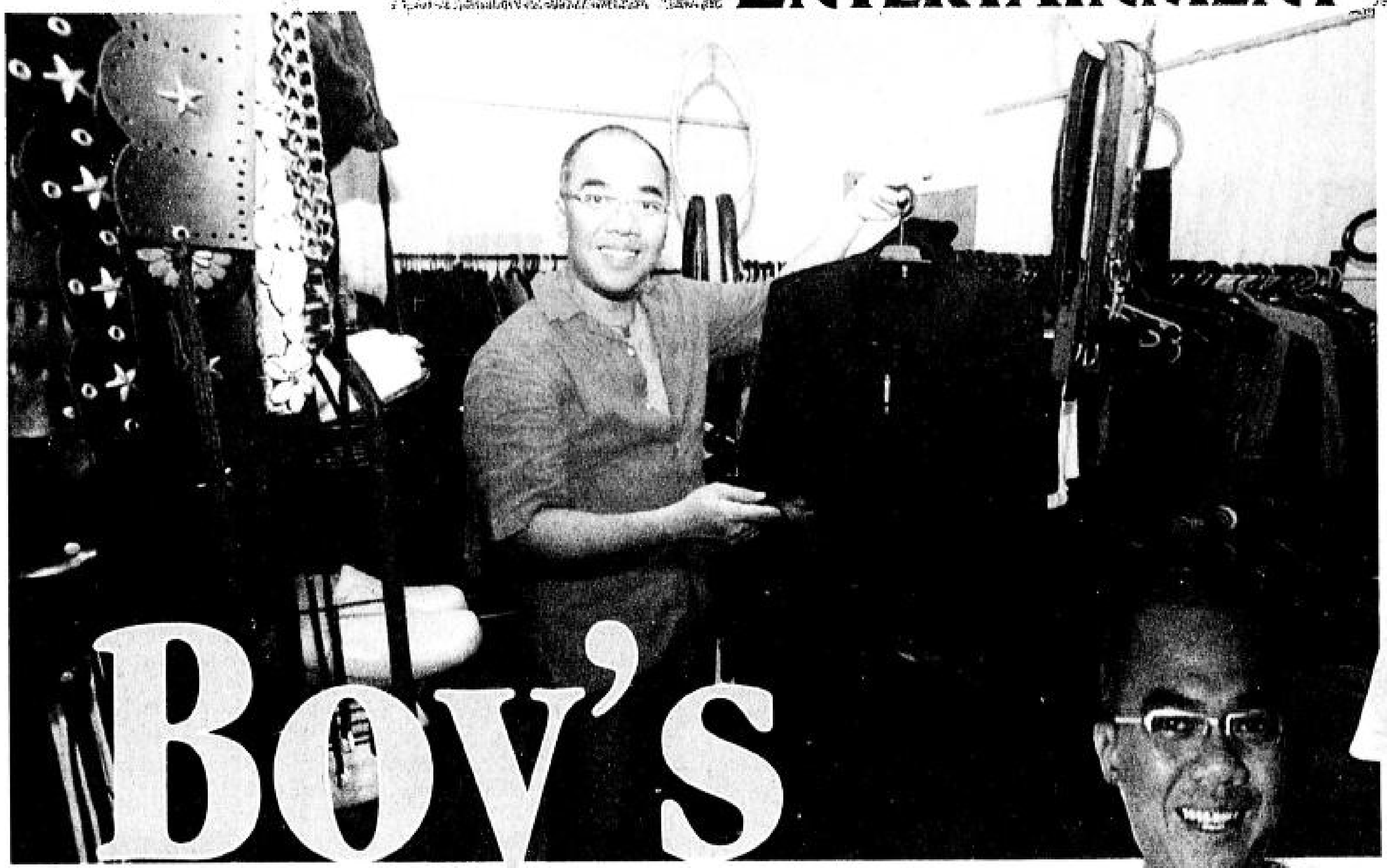


MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
PELIKULANG DAPAT TUTULAN O SUPORTAHAN NG AMERIKA? KAYO NA ANG HUMUSGA!
Rey Malonzo ★ Patricia Javier ★ Monsour del Rosario and Eddie Garcia
OPERATION BALIKATAN
Christian Boeving Nate Adams Davee Youngblood Nigel Hogge
Also starring CARLO MACEDA JESS LAPID JR. ARCHIE ADAMOS JOSE MARI AVELLANA ERNIE ZARATE JOE ZUCCHERO JAMES PAOLLELI MIKKA AVELLANA SANTI LARRAURI ROBERT RIVERA JENOR ZAPANTA
'NOOD NA HABANG DI PA NABA-BAN SA MGA SINEHAN!
NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE ALL AGES ADMITTED
Christopher de Leon & Regine Velasquez
Dingdong Dantes
Sa radyo - big hit ang kanta!
Sa TV - big hit ang mga bida!
Sa Film Fest - Big event ang pelikula!
Pangarap Ko Ang Ibigin Ka
PELIKULA NI LOUIE LAGDAMEO IGNACIO
VIVA
NESCAFÉ TimTam Rexona
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE MANILA FILM FEST
NOW SHOWING



OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2003!
NOW SHOWING
PAMBATA, PANG MATANDA, PANG PAMILYA !!!
ENDORSED BY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
PADILLA
jacky WOO
ALAB NG LAHI
P 50,000 REWARD
DEAD or ALIVE
RELEASED THRU : FLT FILMS INTERNATIONAL



Boy's boudouir

By Louie C. Camino

IF BOY Abunda were hiding in a figurative closet, he would need one as big as a gym for his energy and his gift of gab and his laughter. But he has never had a need for that kind of closet, for no boundaries could confine him and his exuberance and excitement, and his wide, sweeping gestures, not even a very big figurative closet.

OUT OF THE CLOSET

For his real closet needs, he also has to have a big one. So he converted one whole bedroom in his four-bedroom house in a quiet village in Quezon City into a closet. It's a small bedroom,, but it's the entire bedroom that is now his closet, and "it's bursting," he says, "because my clothes from even as far back as 10 years ago are still there. And I have many clothes I go back to, clothes I bought five, six years ago that I'm still able to use today."

Indeed, the closet is so full that it overflows into the short, narrow space that passes for a corridor between the bedrooms and the living room and dining area. "And in my bedroom," he says, "the closets are all full of clothes, too. It's hard to give away men's clothes, so mine are all at home. Sometimes I give away to friends and the *badings* at the office. But these are not the kinds of clothes that you can give away to your driver. Otherwise, my driver would be like an impersonator in a gay bar."

Some of the old clothes, including jackets and blazers by Randy Ortiz and Frederick Peralta, date back from almost 10 years ago when Boy started as a television host, on "Show and Tell" with Gretchen Barretto and later with Dawn Zulueta.

"Ang feeling *ko,"* he says, trying to explain his former dressing style and trying to supress a guffaw at the same time, *"bagay sa akin kahit hindi bagay sa akin*. That's still there. I'm still as daring and wild in terms of colors. Now, I think I have more choices but I'm still a fashion victim. That hasn't changed."

This wild and wonderful fashion victim also describes himself as "not afraid, I've always been unafraid."

These days, Boy's congested closets are filled with all the pricey designer labels the fashion world can invent, a far cry from his frayed denim days.

"You know me," he says. "Ten or more than 10 years ago, there were things I would wear not because they were fashionable but because they were the only things I had. Even before TV, for example, as my good friend Ethel Timbol would say, *'di pa uso ang butas na maong, nagsusuot na ako ng butas na maong dahil butas talaga ang maong ko.* And then it became a fashion statement. The more people would say, *'Ano ba 'yan?'*, the more I like it."

As early as 10 years ago, he was already into deconstruction, *"pero hindi pa kami* close *noon nila* Comme des Garcon *at* Vivienne Westwood." Deconstruction is fine on his Sunday show biz talk show "The Buzz" on ABS-CBN, but he also hosts news and current affairs shows like "Kontrobersyal" and "Private Conversations," and he has to rein in his untamed style for these programs.

"I cannot experiment too wildly with my clothes because I talk to the president of the country, to respected journalists. On 'The Buzz,' I can still wear my green stripes over blue, whatever, without anybody organizing a protest rally outside ABS-CBN. I've mellowed a little, but essentially I'm still the Waray-Waray who can wear a banana leaf over jeans and flaunt it as if it were designed by John Galliano."

Does he still remember the very first designer labels he owned?

His hands slicing the air upward and sideways, and his diction slicing the ears, Boy replies, "Social climbing is such a busy activity. I've been lost in the maelstrom of social climbing. I don't remember the first designer clothes I owned."

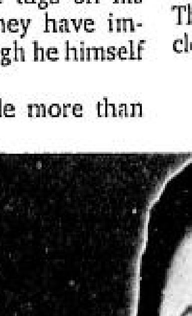
As often in a really private conversation with Boy Abunda, there has got to be some sex. He adds, "I don't even remember the way I was devirginized, or where! That's true. Do you? My first sex happened way, way before my first love. But I don't remember how it happened. I'm not into first times."

This may not be the first time Boy is admitting that he dares to wear eye-catching, throat-grabbing clothes "because admittedly when I was starting, I wanted to be noticed."

SHIRTING the issue, Boy has tie-dyed shirts for "dressing down," the Paul Smith shirt below for dressing up, and "manang" jeans paired with branded shirts and shoes.

STAINED ART. The hand painting covers ink stains on this Versace.

THE MATRIX by Gaultier



"I wasn't pretty enough to be noticed," he says. "I enjoy attention, but I don't necessarily look for approval. It's enough for me that you like or dislike what I wear, but I do not solicit your approval. *Masama ba 'yon?* I don't have a fabulous body. Neither do I have a fabulous face to protect, so it is probably because I'm wanting attention that I'm not afraid to wear trench coats under the scorching heat of the sun."

While his fashion daring, according to Boy, has remained intact, the price tags on his clothes have improved, and they have improved in a very big way, although he himself would rather say just "a bit."

"You're able to afford a little more than what you could not afford 10 years ago," he says. "I could not afford an Armani trench coat 10 years ago, but I can save for it now."

In those days, Boy had been able to wear designer clothes with a lot of help from his friend Eric Pe Benito, "one of the best fashion merchandisers." Eric would buy clothes in Milan, Paris and other fashion capitals and then sell these in Manila.

"I was not earning enough money to be able to afford the clothes that I wanted, like a Versace jacket which was P40,000 to P50,000. One time, Eric had four items that I liked–a Versace jacket, D&G long sleeves, an Armani jacket, etc. The total cost was over P100,000. I asked if I could pay on instalment. Eric agreed. *Hinulugan ko,* I don't know for how long. It must have been six months. I was still with Channel 7."

Not much has changed as far as his shopping for clothes is concerned. The boy from Samar still buys those rarefied brands and still pays for them on instalment–but with credit cards now. *"Siyempre,* card *ka lang nang* card, *hindi mo nararamdaman. Pagbalik mo rito, naisanla mo na pala ang puri mo.*

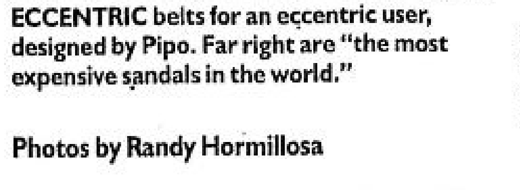
"I've repented for my sins," he adds. "When times are hard, I also adjust. I don't go to the shops I usually visit. I have learned to mix-match, to recycle. After all, people don't remember the clothes I wore five years ago. Only Kris (Aquino) does. She's the only one who'll tell me, 'you know what you wore that in the FAP Awards? It's a repetition.' She remembers everything."

Boy, who aside from hosting the three ABS-CBN shows is also the figure behind the Backroom talent management, publicity and events company, will always remember that clothes and the other items that cram his closet are his own reward for working very hard.

"I don't gamble," he says, "I don't go for girls, I quit smoking three years ago. I drink two glasses of red wine once a month. The only thing that really fascinates me is clothing. I'm not into big, flashy cars (He has

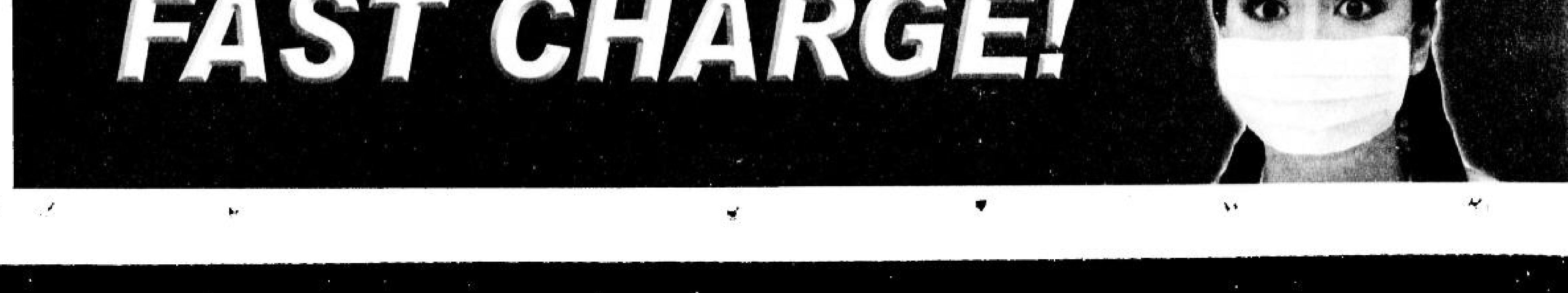
BOY'S/ C7

THROUGH D&G lenses, brightly, Boy shows off his eyewear.



ECCENTRIC belts for an eccentric user, designed by Pipo. Far right are "the most expensive sandals in the world."

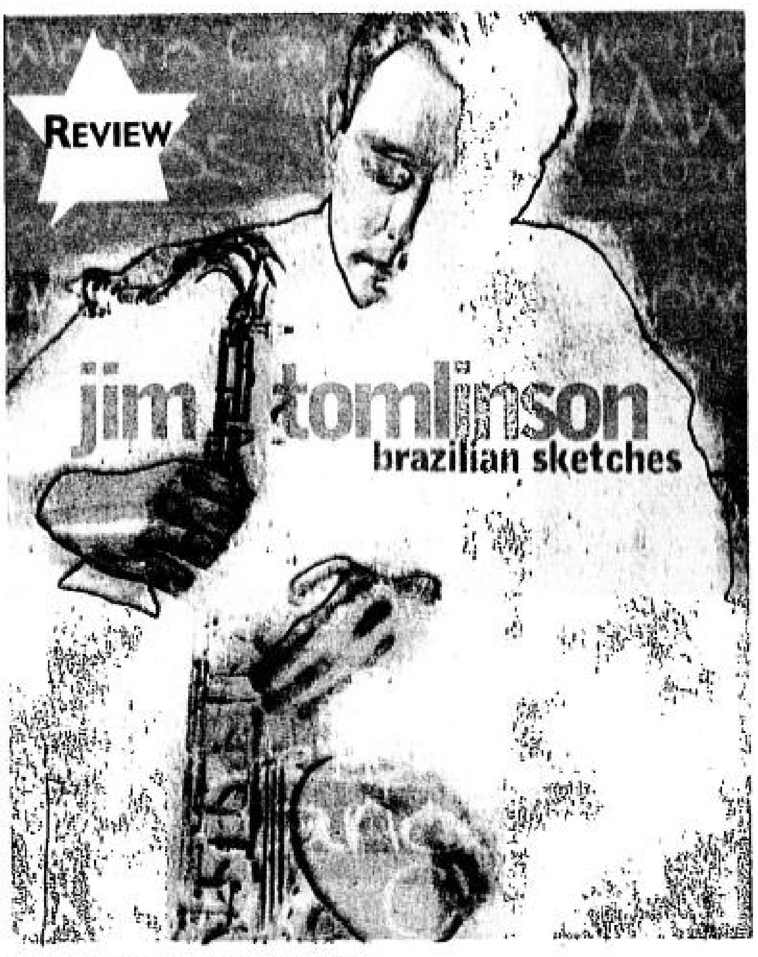
Photos by Randy Hormillosa



FAST CHARGE!

Bossa nova played with passion and with love

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao



TOMLINSON pays tribute to Getz.

BRAZIL means many things to many people. For football-crazy fans, it is the unprecedented five-time winner of the World Cup that produced such stars as Pele and Ronaldo. For environmentalists, it is the Amazon River.

But for music lovers, Brazil is bossa nova, that infectious and sometimes melancholy kind of music introduced to the world by such musical greats as singer/songwriter Antonio Carlos Jobim, guitarist Joao Gilberto and American saxophonist Stan Getz.

It is this kind of music that tenor saxophonist Jim Tomlinson pays tribute to in his second album, "Brazilian Sketches," released in his native England in 2001. The 11-track album has Tomlinson playing his tenor saxophone to such classic bossa nova tunes as "*So Danco Samba*" (I Only Dance Samba), "Dreamer" (*Vivo Sohando*), and "No More Blues" (*Chega de Saudade*).

It is a tall order for a young tenor saxophonist like Tomlinson to play these tunes, which have been forever associated with the style of Getz, who was credited for bringing bossa nova to the United States. Tomlinson, however, does not attempt to erase any trace of Getz in his interpretation of the Jobim compositions. Instead, he takes inspiration from Getz' soulful rendition of the songs and simply injects a more youthful touch into these classics which caught the world by storm in the 1960s and permanently created an image of Brazil's women as tall and tan and young and lovely.

While Getz' recordings tended to place the saxophone at the center of the song, Tomlinson favors a more ensemble approach, with the members of his handpicked quartet showing their own passion for bossa nova, even if his easy and elegant playing remains the center of attraction.

Tomlinson's wife Stacey Kent, with five albums to her credit, provides the vocals for "Dreamer," "So Nice", "I Concentrate on You" and "The Gentle Rain" with Tomlinson's horn as the perfect counterpoint.

The perfect union of Kent's vocals and Tomlinson's saxophone is reminiscent of the collaboration between Getz and Astrud Gilberto, with Getz' deeper and more forceful playing providing the needed foil to Gilberto's breathy, little-girl voice.

Tomlinson first heard a record of Getz and Gilberto when he was 14 and living in the far north of England. "Suffice it to say that 20 years later, the music of Stan Getz is a continuing source of inspiration to me and my passion for bossa nova is unabated," Tomlinson says in his album's liner notes.

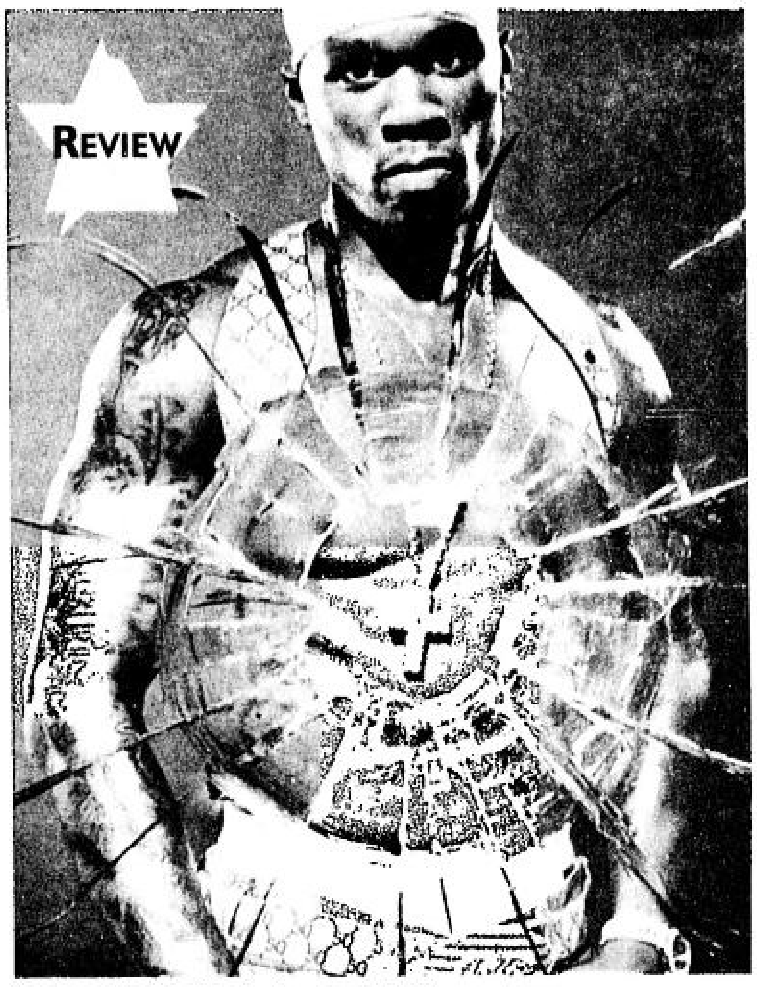
While reading philosophy at University College in Oxford, Tomlinson formed his own quartet and joined the Ritz Hotel's resident swing band, Vile Bodies.

He went for postgraduate studies in music at the Guildhall School of Music where he met his future wife Stacey Kent. He has since earned a jazz reputation as an accomplished saxophonist with a ballad style of playing.

Tomlinson says he plays his saxophone with the lyrics playing in his head. He says this helps him properly phrase his notes. And it helps the listener feel the emotions behind the songs even if the listener doesn't know a word of Portuguese.

Some may find Tomlinson's album lacking because it does not have the bossa nova hits such as "Girl From Ipanema," "Desafinado," "Corcovado" and "One Note Samba," but perhaps it is because these songs have been revived and rehashed so often that Tomlinson avoided them. He went instead for lesser known songs that are still a major part of bossa nova culture in his first attempt at interpreting Brazilian music.

But the loving way with which he plays these songs makes his album a must-have.



CURTIS JACKSON, also known as 50 Cent.

50 Cent on the price of living on the edge

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

50 CENT
'Get Rich or Die Tryin'
Shady/Aftermath/Interscope

CHART-TOPPING rapper Curtis Jackson, more popularly known as 50 Cent, has been around for quite some time but is only getting airplay fairly recently after he hooked up with star executive producers Dr. Dre and award-winning hate-monger Eminem.

50 Cent had been creating bootleg mix tapes of his own creations with his business pal and co-manager, Sha Money XL, purely to create buzz for himself. This led to his real big break after one of his later efforts, "50 Cent is the Future," eventually landed in the hands of Eminem.

His colorful biography fuels his rage-ridden new album, "Get Rich or Die Tryin," which is expectedly a brutally honest and vivid depiction of the rapper's life in the 'hood and his gradual rise to success. The 26-year-old went through a childhood surrounded by drugs and the dangers that accompanied them. Orphaned at an early age, he got involved in various moneymaking schemes (not all of them legal), but seriously pursued a career in rap music after the birth of his son.

And the material presents a rawness that supposedly reflects his past street exploits. There's an ever-present catchiness to the rather spare beats, each song's characteristically repetitive hooks flavoring 50's monotonous-sounding rap tales.

The strength of each gritty piece, though, is its lyrical content's capacity to provoke. 50 can pitch line after grimy line of his thoughts about money, living on the edge, and struggling for freedom and survival.

Collaboration

The first single off the album, "In Da Club," has been enjoying heavy video rotation as well as constant radio airplay. Eminem appears in the video, too, lending visible support to the new hip-hop hitmaker. The pair, also expectedly, collaborated on three tracks, "Patiently Waiting," "Don't Push Me," and "High All the Time," two of which feature Em's trademark angsty rhyming.

50 Cent's striking wordplays are strung in verse after verse of roaring machismo, which can get a little trying after a few spins. The themes are, understandably, and unmistakably, mostly the discomforts of a once-impoverished struggling artist, and the lure of debauchery and the street's darker aspects. He brandishes every "f," "n," and "s" word every chance he gets, which is predictable of supposedly edgy rap artists.

He gets downright threatening in "Patiently Waiting," and doubly so in "Many Men (Wish Death)": "Better watch how you talk when you talk about me/ 'cause I'll take your life away/ Many men/ wish death upon me."

50 Cent also refers to a violent incident he survived, claiming in the bonus cut that nobody "ain't strong enough to take nine like me." He was shot nine times three years ago and lived to tell the tale.

Acquired taste

One of the album's few uplifting tracks, "21 Questions," talks about liking someone, for a change. Perhaps the most accessible one among the 18 cuts, it shows a somewhat sunny side to 50 Cent that we don't get to hear during most of the CD's 69 minutes. Apparently, "Get Rich or Die Tryin" is more concerned with the classic trappings–run-ins with the law, getting high, and the pleasures good moolah can buy.

50 Cent's hit debut album is an acquired taste. One can have difficulty differentiating one heavy and thudding tune from another, and that's not just because of the similarities in thematic content. His rapping style, however distinct, rarely shifts.

But there's an uncompromising bent that gives his music authenticity, an attitude that justifies his perennial angry posturing, and his artistic vision deserves to be heard because of it. Enjoying it can be a totally different matter altogether, though.

PG-13 Parents are strongly warned against bringing children below 13 on account of the attempted rape of the leading man by the gay manager
OPENS JUNE 19
Exclusively at SM Megamall

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Some families can survive anything. Even each other.

Gromberg (Michael Douglas) is a man caught in the middle. Trying to avoid the mistakes his father made, Alex is navigating the tricky roles of father, son, and husband.

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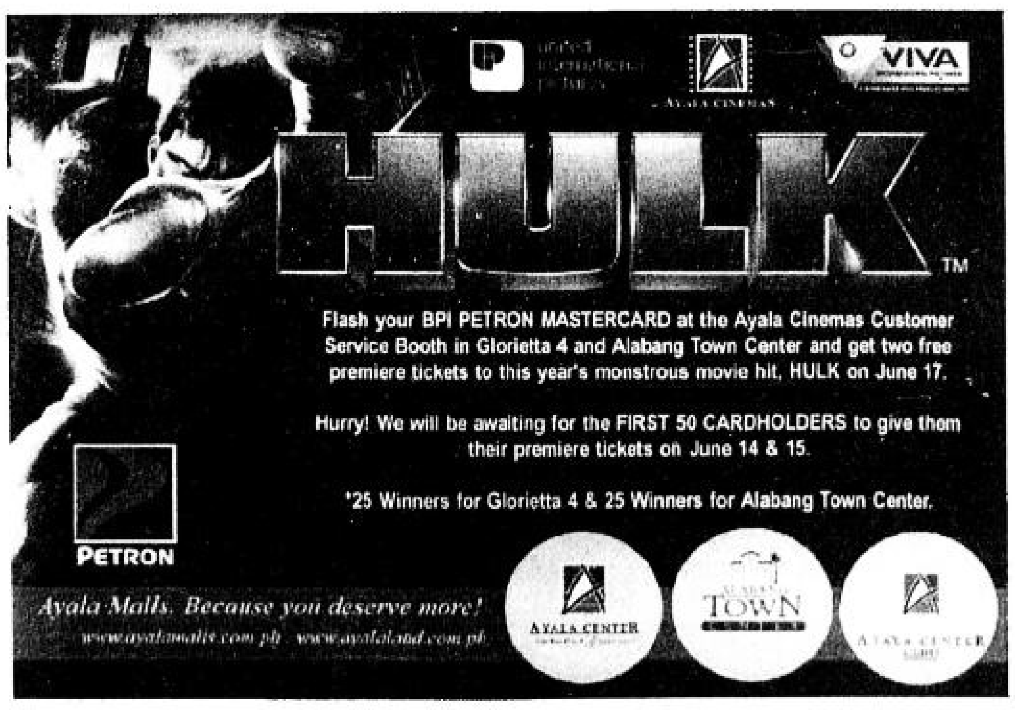
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)



Flash your BPI PETRON MASTERCARD at the Ayala Cinemas Customer Service Booth in Glorietta 4 and Alabang Town Center and get two free premiere tickets to this year's monstrous movie hit, HULK on June 17.

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OPENS JUNE 18 AT ArtFilm
PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE
ADAM SANDLER EMILY WATSON

A romantic comedy about an odd, spastic man (Sandler) with seven abusive sisters who soon has three thugs chasing him down, all because of a one-time call to a professional phone-sex operator made in a moment of quiet desperation. This threatens his awkwardly blossoming relationship with one of his sister's co-workers (Watson) before it gets a chance to start.

Awards: Best Director - 2002 Cannes Film Festival; Best Director, Best Supporting Actress (Watson) - 2002 Toronto Film Critics Association

COFFEE CLUB DISCUSSION ON "PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE" on June 18 at 7pm. For inquiries, contact 752-7869 or 752-7872.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)
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INQUIRER

PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KITA
Ali 2	ALAB NG LAHI
Ali 3	SANIB
Ali 4	BERTUD NG PUTIK
Ali 5	ANG HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
Ali 6	SANIB
Ali 7	OPERATION BALIKATAN
ARANETA COLISEUM	
JUNE 14	MARTIN & REGINE CONCERT
JUNE 16,18,20	WORLD SLASHER CUP DERBY
JUNE 15 & 22	PBA GAMES
JUNE 28	NCAA OPENING CEREMONIES
JULY 12	UAAP OPENING CEREMONIES
JULY 13	UAAP GAMES

ELEPHANT WORLD
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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	ALAB NG LAHI
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	ALAB NG LAHI
B	BERTUD NG PUTIK
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
CINEMA-2	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-3	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SANIB
CINEMA-6	ALAB NG LAHI
CINEMA-7	BERTUD NG PUTIK
CINEMA-8	OPERATION BALIKATAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SANIB
CINEMA-12	ALAB NG LAHI
CINEMA-14	BERTUD NG PUTIK
CINEMA-15	OPERATION BALIKATAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KITA
CINEMA 2	PUTIK
CINEMA 3	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
CINEMA 4	SANIB
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

Little rising action

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

IN HER last film with **Richard Gomez**, **Regine Velasquez** turned some viewers off by playing her old maid-ish character like a cartoon caricature. In her new movie "Pangarap Kong Ibigin Ka," she shows that she hasn't learned her lesson and portrays her character as excessively ditzy and daft.

To make things worse, the movie's storyline is exceedingly tenuous and has little rising action to speak of. And first-time feature film director **Louie Ignacio** concentrates mostly on visuals rather than emotions, and aids and abets Regine's excesses with some of his own.

Try this improbable situation on for size: Regine has hunky **Dingdong Dantes** for her boyfriend, but breaks up with him because she's fed up with his lack of ambition, and because he doesn't light up her world with love, as she believes all boyfriends should.

Who will take Dingdong's place?. Darned if the ditzy Regine knows. The point is, she wants more, she wants everything, and Dingdong isn't it.

One fine day, she finally meets the heretofore man of her dreams–but he (**Christopher de Leon**) turns out to be a brand-new widower who is grieving for his recently departed wife. What chance does Regine have to insinuate herself into his affections? None. Still, being the cute kook she is, she gives it a heck of a try.

This is where the movie's plotting more or less settles down to low underdrive and the film tries to get by with a series of "cute" and "kooky" gimmicks. Alas, they're both too little and too much, prompting the viewers to our left to impatiently mumble, *"Ano ba yan?"*

The plotting picks up again when Christopher finally gets interested enough in Regine to invite her for an all-day eating and sightseeing spree out of town, which unexpectedly segues into all-night (gasp!) lovemaking.

Inexplicably, however, Christopher has a change of heart because, as his character lamely puts it, he isn't sure if he can still fully and passionately love again! What a silly cop-out...

So, Regine suffers exquisitely until she can't take it any longer (the audience knows what that feels like)–and then, she lashes out at Christopher so vehemently that he's finally shaken out of his indecision and realizes that he really loves her after all. Well, finally!

Trouble is, he decides to express his love for Regine in public by way of song. This is supposed to be a big deal for his character, who has never been demonstrative when it comes to love. But the scene rings false, because he has to share it with Dingdong–who, while Christopher is talking, manfully urges Regine to seize her happiness, etc! As a result, the film's denouement is clumsy instead of romantic.

We trust that, in her next starrer, Regine insists on a more eventful story, a more believable character to play, and more helpful direction. She should also decide once and for all to stop overacting for kooky effect and concentrate instead on understanding and empathizing with the characters she plays, as all actors should.

'Funniest Animals'

THE ANIMAL Planet's hit show, "The Planet's Funniest Animals," is now on its third season. Its fun-filled episodes capture the spontaneous comedy that takes place where animals are found, from the wilds to inside urban dwellers' homes. Matt Gallant offers similarly bemusing commentary.

Quickie

QUICKIE (John Michael Tupaz) is a rap artist who goes for lyrics with "double meanings." His album, "Quickie Tayo," offers more of the same, but he swears that his numbers are *"bastos pakinggan, pero 'di naman bastos ang ibig sabihin."* Promise, *ha*?

Direk Heidi

DIREK Heidi Sison has put up The Character Building Foundation to spark fundamental change in the country. Projects include:

Paint the Future. Nationwide painting contest for children.

Mga Kuwento ni Direk Heidi. Storytelling with visual interpretation.

Personal Development Seminars. On parenting, work ethics and value formation.

Gabi ng Musikang Pilipino. Fund-raising concert on June 27 at the Irwin Theater at Ateneo de Manila University. Performers include Jose Mari Chan, Celeste Legaspi, Anna Fegi and Robert Sena. Call 426-2983.

'Boomtown'

AXN's newest show, "Boomtown," premiers on June 16. The crime drama series has gotten positive reviews from critics in a number of TV territories. AXN, the Action Channel, specializes in hard-edged, high-adventure shows for the intrepid viewers.

Cirio Santiago cries foul over ABS-CBN's 'nilalangaw' report

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

DIRECTOR **Cirio Santiago** cried "foul" after watching ABS-CBN's late-night news "Headlines," which described his movie, "Operation Balikatan" as "*nilalangaw*" or not making money.

"That's not fair," Santiago told INQUIRER Entertainment. "People called me up to ask me if it was true. The report is not helping my movie."

Santiago said "Headlines" anchor **Karen Davila** made a comment after reporter **Jayvee Villar**'s live feed on the first-day box-office grosses of the entries in the Manila Film Festival last June 11.

"I respect her as a journalist," Santiago said. "I watch her every day. She belongs to the entertainment industry. She should support the filmfest entries.

"She can watch my movie and she can criticize it. But to say that it's not making money on the first day of showing, that's unfair. When a Star Cinema movie is not making money, can she say that on TV?"

Karen, however, told the INQUIRER, the "*nilalangaw*" comment did not come from her but from Villar.

"It's not possible that it came from me," Karen explained. "We can even preview the tape to prove who really said it."

Villar admitted he made the comment in his report.

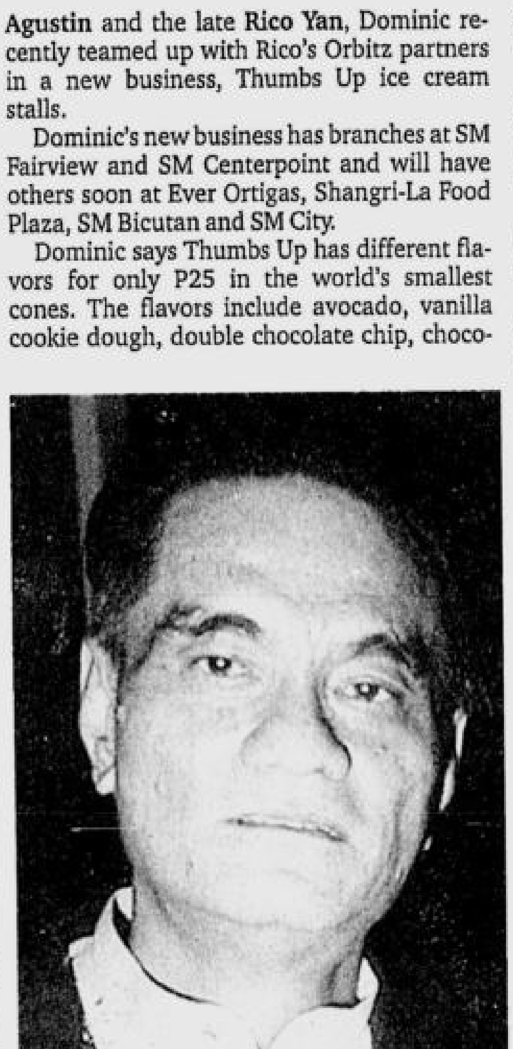
"I have no control on content reporting," Karen pointed out.

"Whoever said it, it's still not fair," said Santiago.

The director, who also wrote and produced "Operation Balikatan" which has a budget of P25 million, has sold the movie rights to HBO for cable airing.

"With the deal I made with HBO, my movie will make more than the top moneymaker in the filmfest," Santiago said.

"Operation Balikatan," which dramatizes the joint military exercises between the United States and the Philippines, will air on HBO late this year with the English title, "When Eagles Strike."



SANTIAGO. Not fair!

Thumbs-Up for Dominic

AMONG the "Whattamen" boys, only **Dominic Ochoa** hasn't embarked on a business venture. Until now.

Inspired by his show biz friends Marvin **Agustin** and the late **Rico Yan**, Dominic recently teamed up with Rico's Orbitz partners in a new business, Thumbs Up ice cream stalls.

Dominic's new business has branches at SM Fairview and SM Centerpoint and will have others soon at Ever Ortigas, Shangri-La Food Plaza, SM Bicutan and SM City.

Dominic says Thumbs Up has different flavors for only P25 in the world's smallest cones. The flavors include avocado, vanilla cookie dough, double chocolate chip, chocolate, coffee, corn, strawberry and cookies and cream.

Dominic works with the same people who were behind Rico's successful Orbitz pearl shake chain. "Without these people, I wouldn't be where I am now," Dominic says.

The past year was a year of trials for Dominic. His friend Rico passed away. His noontime show, "Magandang Tanghali Bayan" underwent a number of changes, as did his Wednesday night sitcom, "Whattamen."

But it was also a year of triumphs. Dominic continues to endorse Smart's Talk N' Text, with Marvin Agustin and new models **Jericho Rosales**, **Kristine Hermosa** and veteran comedian **Dolphy**.

All of Dominic's three movies from Star Cinema–"Got to Believe," "Jologs" and "Nine Mornings"–made a killing at the tills.

Dominic remains grateful to Rico, who paved the way for him to hook up with the people who are now helping him in business.

"I know there is a risk involved here," Dominic allows. "In show biz or in anything, there is always a risk. But as long as you believe strongly in your business, you can't go wrong, especially if your business is consistent with your image as a show biz personality."

For Thumbs-Up franchises, call 687-3436 or 687-4373.

REPEAT. Martin Nievera and Regine Velasquez return to the Big Dome.

Extended

PEOPLE can't seem to have enough of **Martin Nievera** and **Regine Velasquez** together onstage. After three sold-out performances at the Araneta Coliseum that followed their five-city US concert tour, Martin and Regine will have another show at the Big Dome on July 5, produced by Maxi-Media International.

Martin has just concluded a well-received month-long stint at the Golden Nugget Hotel in Las Vegas, with an offer of a repeat next year.

The July 5 Araneta show will coincide with Martin's 21st anniversary in show biz.

Regine is still euphoric over the recent box-office triumph of "Pangarap Ko ang Ibigin Ka," her screen reunion with **Christopher de Leon** for Viva Films. It is the undisputed top-grosser in the ongoing Manila Film Festival.

ICE CREAM MAN. Dominic Ochoa sells ice cream in different flavors.

Ariel and Chiqui

IT WAS good to see **Ariel Ureta** and **Chiqui Hollman-Yulo** together again on TV Friday noon on ANC.

Ariel took over for **Cito Beltran** on "Straight Talk" and the guest was Chiqui, who started her TV career on Ariel's show, "For the Boys," 25 years ago. Ariel and Chiqui had a lively repartee. Both were witty and spontaneous.

Toward the end of the show, one viewer called, saying it would be interesting to see Ariel and Chiqui hosting a regular talk show.

The audience had a glimpse of Chiqui's son **Chino** and daughter **Chia**, both students of the University of Asia and the Pacific.

Chiqui admits she's not thinking of doing TV again, especially a daily noontime show. She made a name on "Eat Bulaga," where she was christened "Double L, Double N."

DID YOU KNOW...

CURTIS

EVANGELISTA

Teen star **Anne Curtis** and some of her friends were barred from entering Greenbelt's newest bar, Temple, because of its "21 years old and above only" policy. The INQUIRER source said she half-expected Anne and her friends to raise a howl of protest when the bouncers prevented them from entering the place. Instead, Anne calmly walked out of the bar and went to the adjoining Magnum.

Also seen at Temple were stars **Heart Evangelista**, **Raymond Bagatsing** and **Chubi del Rosario**, as well as cagers **Enrico Villanueva** of Red Bull and **Wesley Gonzales** of Ateneo.

Boy's boudouir

From page C5

two vans, a Road Trek and a Starex). That's how I reward myself, with clothes. Other people do it with cars, houses, jewelry or food, I do it with clothes."

Jackets. "I still have an old haute couture Gaultier that you can wear as a long coat a la Matrix. If you fold up the lower half over the upper half, you can wear it as a jacket.

"I also have a very old D&G jacket which I bought seven-eight years ago. A bit frayed at the edges, but I still like it very much *kasi nagmumura talaga ang* D&G logo! And you can move around the two D&G velcro labels."

Eyeglasses. "I have a really big collection of glasses, all sorts. D&G has been very kind. I wear nothing but D&G glasses because I'm sponsored by them. In news and public affairs, you can't experiment. On The Buzz I can. Last Sunday, I opened with a pair that's as big as my nose. This black-rimmed pair is my favorite because it complements the shape of my face. I have accidentally sat on it several times, but I still use it."

Jeans. "I accidentally spilled ink on my orange Versace jeans after wearing the pair only once. I had an artist friend draw on it to cover the stain. Nice.

"I have a pair of Helmut Lang pants that is ready to fall apart but I still wear it. I have a comfort pair of pants, comfort shoes, because I am a comfort woman."

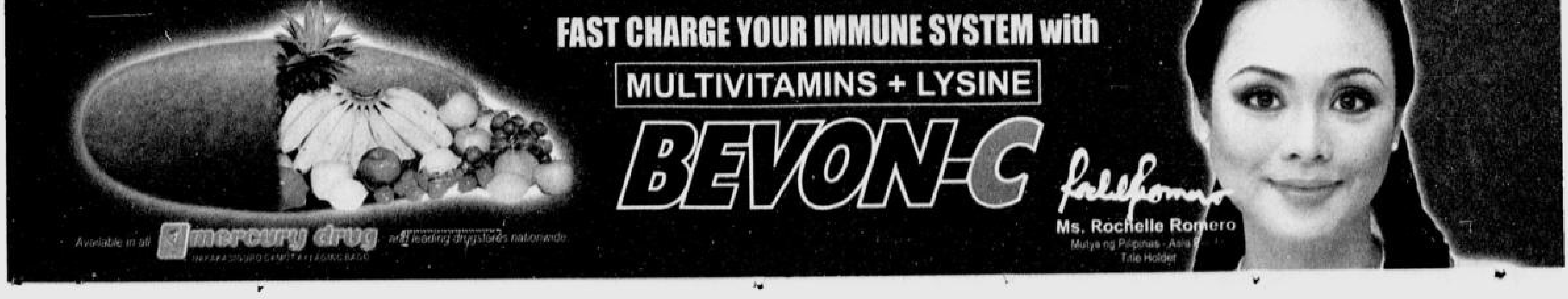
Sleepwear. "I wear a *malong* and a tank shirt to sleep. I feel like I'm Princesa Urduja on the beach."

Footwear. "My pair of Gucci slip-ons are the most expensive sandals in the whole world!

"I have a couple of rubber shoes in my closet but I hardly wear them because I like leather shoes a lot better. I use my Prada, Gucci, Versace and Sergio Rossi leather shoes. Right now, I'm wearing Gianni Barbato. You can use these for a long, long time."

Belts. "I have wild belts, a lot of them branded, a lot also made by my friend Pipo, one of the most beautiful girls in Malate. He's young, he does accessories. I love his belts because they match my eccentric personality. No one in his right mind would wear something so outlandish, *ako lang*."

DIRTY by design, this Helmut Lang pair is one of his faves.



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Slain vendor's dad forgives, 'adopts' VRB chair

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE FATHER of a Makati vendor who was killed in a rumble during a raid by the Videogram Regulatory Board last April is "adopting" VRB Chair Ramon "Bong" Revilla as a "replacement" for his son.

Vendor Mubarak Khalid was killed in an anti-piracy raid in Guadalupe, Makati, last April 23. As a sign of forgiveness, his father Alin Faruk is preparing for an adoption "ritual" for Revilla in their hometown in Lanao del Norte, according to the VRB head.

"I, in turn, will bring Khalid's immediate family to Cavite and introduce them to my father (Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr.)," said Revilla.

Twenty policemen had participated in the raid, arresting vendors and confiscating pirated compact discs (CDs) and video CDs at the Midland Bazaar in Guadalupe Nuevo. A rumble ensued and shots were fired. Khalid was later found slumped on the ground, with a bullet in the abdomen.

Revilla said Khalid, who had been selling pirated CDs and DVDs, had resisted arrest and punched a VRB agent who reacted by shooting him.

"The VRB agents reacted in self-defense," Revilla said. "The vendors fired their *sumpak* (homemade shotgun) and were throwing stones at us."

Two other vendors were injured, he said. Amradin Taher suffered lacerations in the back caused by broken glass, and Abu Gampong was wounded in the head.

Revilla said the VRB shouldered part of the victims' hospital bills as well as Khalid's burial expenses.

"The father (Faruk) said he has come to terms with the death of his son and fully understands that nobody wanted the incident to happen," Revilla said.

He said a Unesco official acted as mediator between Khalid's family and the VRB.

On June 5, at least seven people were hurt when VRB agents and policemen raided stalls selling pirated CDS and DVDs in Quiapo, Manila.

> 'I, in turn, will introduce them to my father (Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr.)'

REVILLA

Revilla said two of his men and a policeman were also hit in the head with rocks.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had appointed Revilla as VRB chair last May, replacing Lualhati Buenafe, who became vice chair and executive director.

A Senate proposal called the Optical Media Bill (OMB) provides for the reorganization of the VRB into what would be called the Optical Media Board.

Revilla said he is worried the new anti-piracy body being proposed in the Senate would prove to be a disadvantage instead of helping to curb piracy.

"The OMB would go after big owners of replicating machines but the proposal offers no guidelines as to what should be done to the vendors of the illegal wares," Revilla pointed out.

Revilla said he was to meet with the staff of Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta last Thursday to discuss how to strengthen the proposed bill. Oreta is the principal sponsor of the OMB.

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Cher, dressed like a beauty pageant contestant in her national costume, performs in this and other typically outlandish gowns in the year-old "Living Proof—The Farewell Tour" at the Madison Square Garden in New York City. The tour is going to other cities and is scheduled to end in August. REUTERS

JACKO'S HOME
Michael Jackson receives an honorary diploma from Roosevelt High School in Gary, Indiana, the city where he was born, where he returns for the first time in decades. He was also presented a key to the city. AP

LifeStyle
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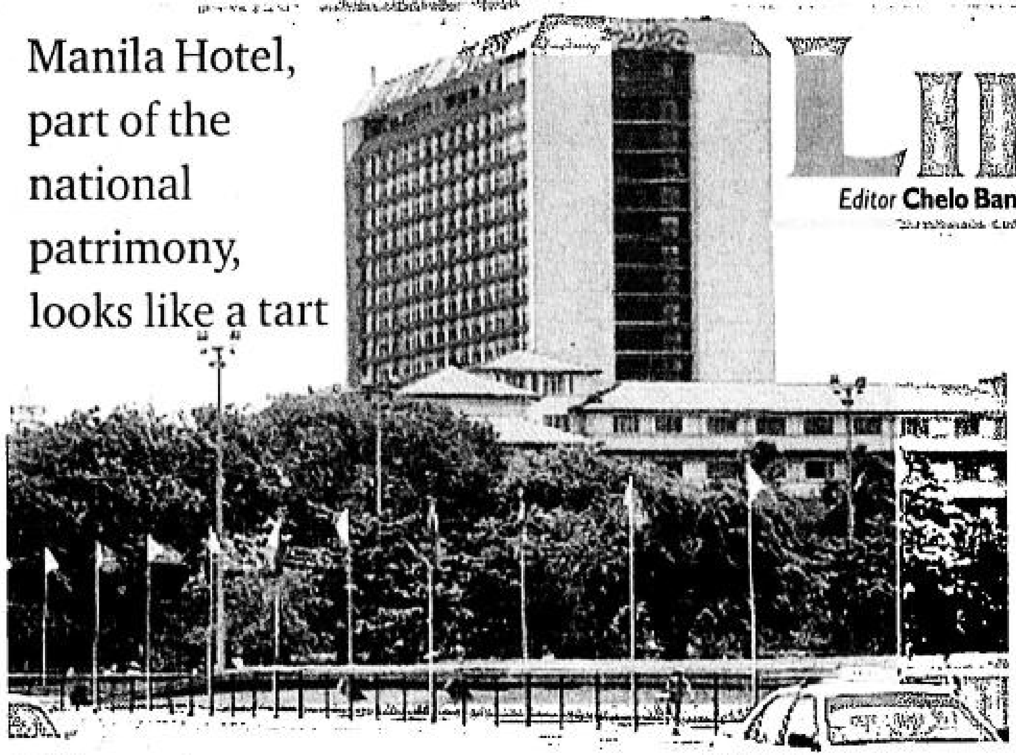
Manila Hotel, part of the national patrimony, looks like a tart



DEFACING historic facades are not allowed in conservation. Are golden signs on the roof really necessary?

Our Manila Hotel goes down the drain

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

SHE was once the undisputed Grande Dame of Manila. Now her integrity has been invaded by tinsel facelifts and ill-fitting robes that cover her in cheap glitter. She has been tarted up to death. She is no longer a source of national pride for Filipinos.

Grande Dame status is not available to anyone. To start with, it takes pedigree to be a grande dame. Breeding comes next, then permanence, and above all, dignity. Our Manila Hotel once had all those qualities in abundance. Today they are all gone.

Pedigree? One look tells us that she is undoubtedly *de buena familia*. She could be called an American mestiza who traces her lineage back to the

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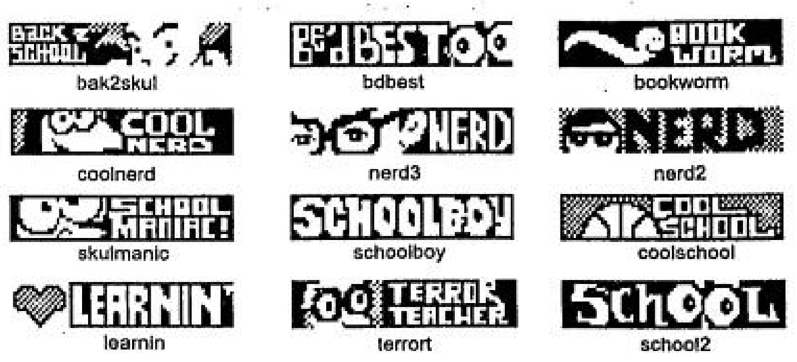
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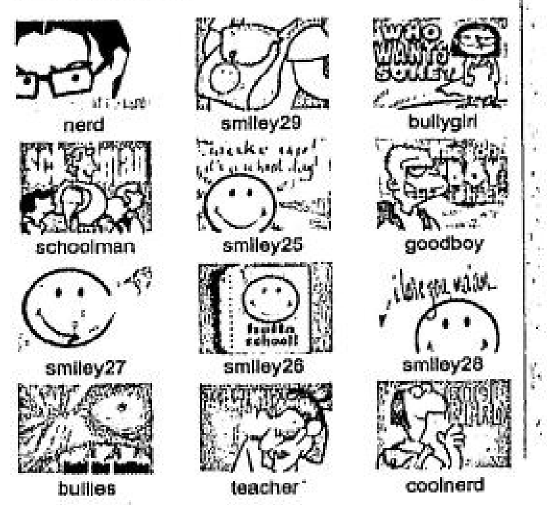
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TITLE	KEYWORD	ARTIST
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Work It Out	*workitou*	*Beyonce Knowles*
I'm With You	*imwithu*	*Avril Lavigne*
Sk8er Boi	*sk8erboi*	*Avril Lavigne*
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Get Ur Freak On	*geturfre*	*Missy Misdemeanor Elliot*
How You Remind Me	*howyou*	*Nickelback*
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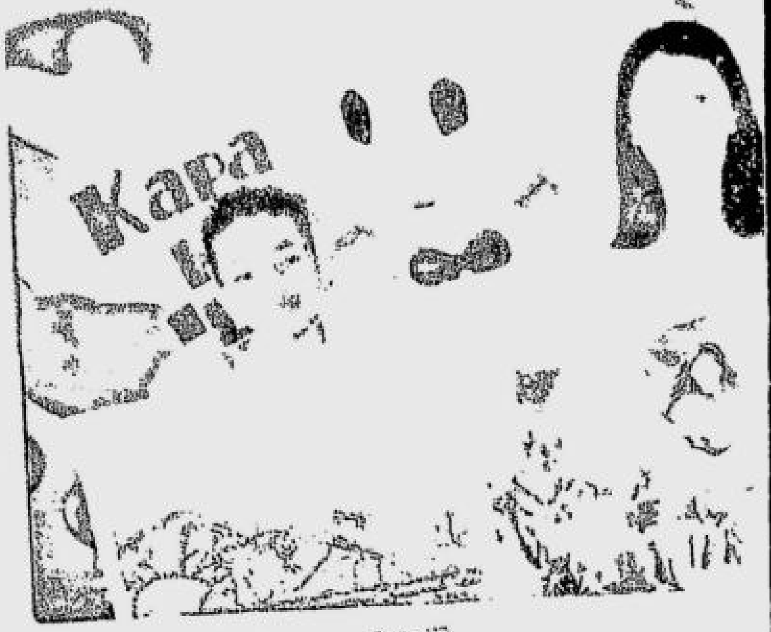
Meet your new Dream Team!

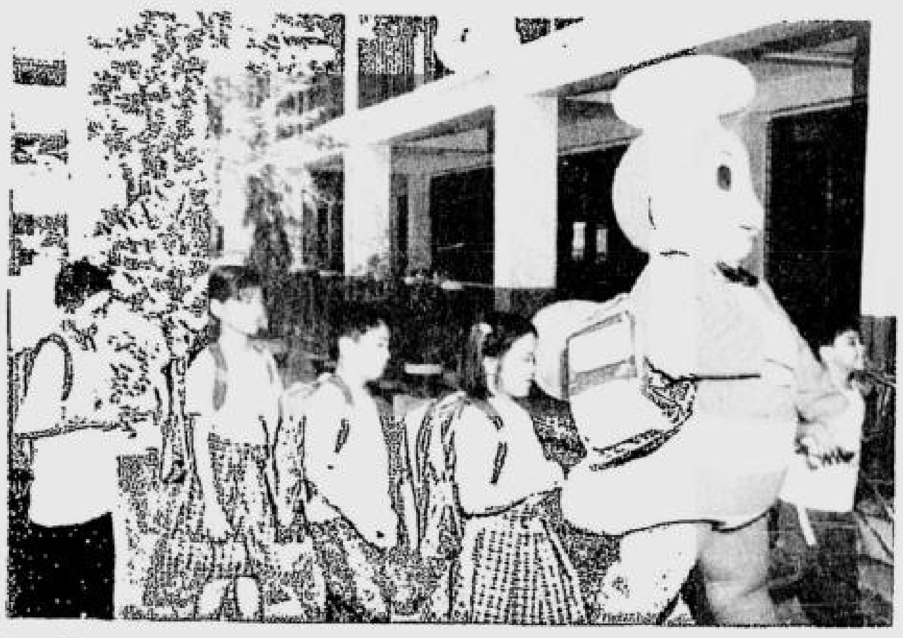
Jollibee, the Department of Education-NCR and Mary Lindbert

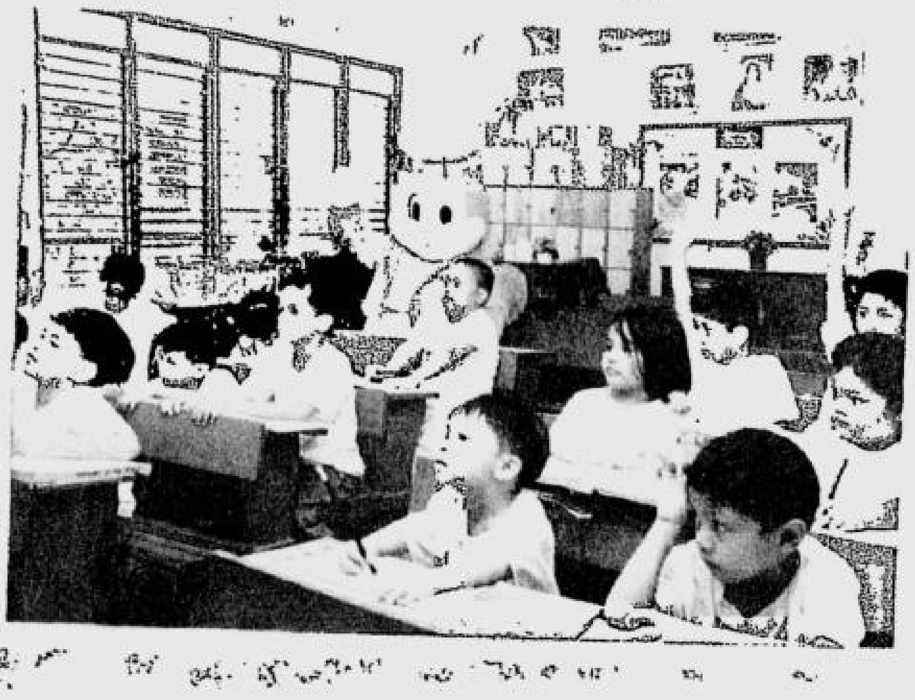
The Dream Team of Jollibee, Mary Lindbert [illegible] Department of Education Usecs. Fe [illegible] and Chito Gascon [illegible] Cora Santiago, Dinah Mindo and Tere [illegible]



Jollibee has a dream:
enable the Filipino children to be nationalistic and disciplined citizens.
With the cooperation of educators and through various grassroots programs
that have been the hallmark of its 25 years of market leadership,
Jollibee has come closer to achieving this dream.

The Department of Education has a miss
develop every child to his fullest poten





Hand in hand with these values are
the virtues that Jollibee envisions to be
enriched: love of family, frugality, honesty, integrity,
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Values that are essential for nation-building.
Values that will equip the youth for global competitiveness.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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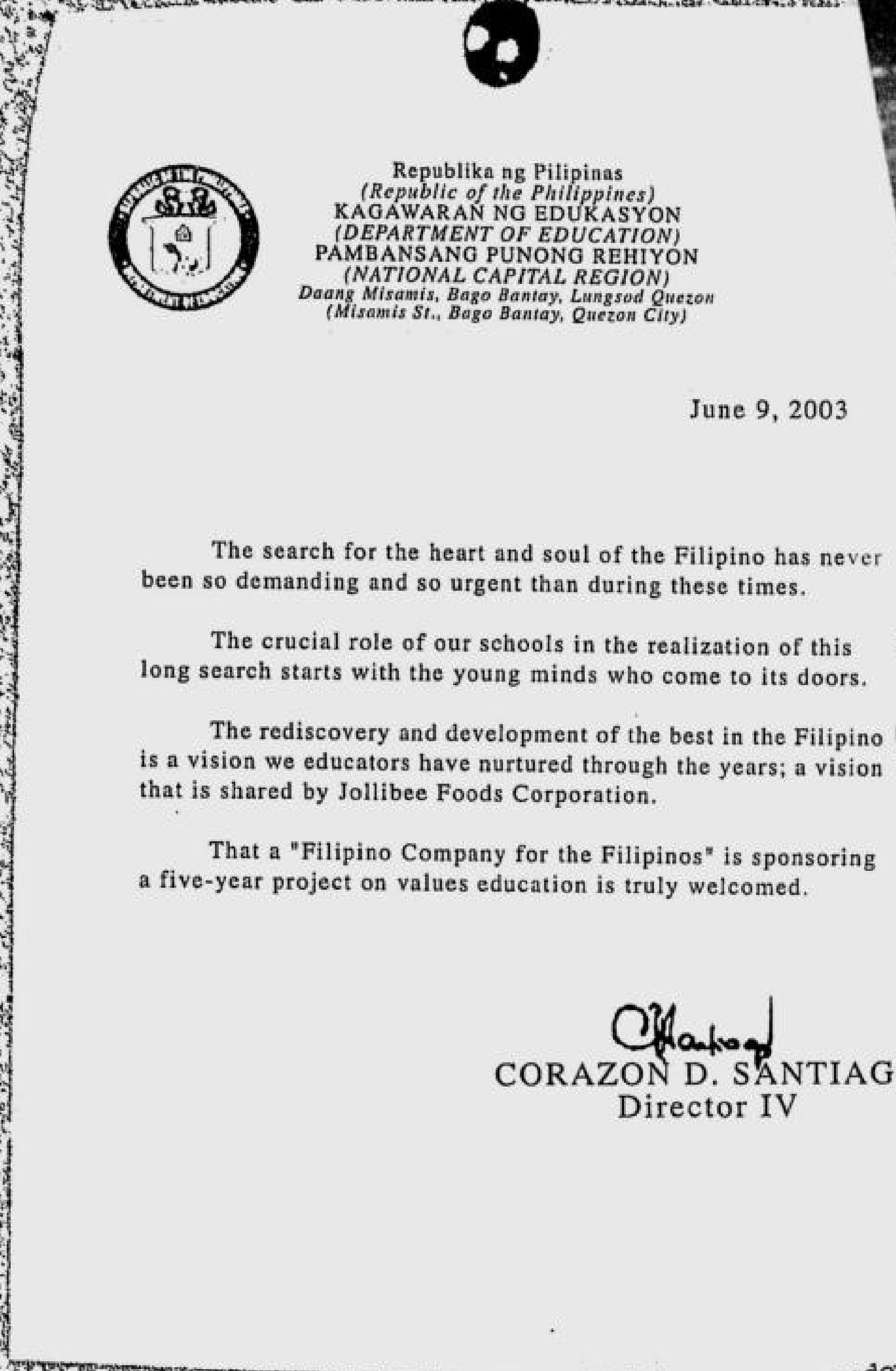

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Daang Misamis, Bago Bantay, Lungsod Quezon
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June 9, 2003

The search for the heart and soul of the Filipino has never been so demanding and so urgent than during these times.

The crucial role of our schools in the realization of this long search starts with the young minds who come to its doors.

The rediscovery and development of the best in the Filipino is a vision we educators have nurtured through the years; a vision that is shared by Jollibee Foods Corporation.

That a "Filipino Company for the Filipinos" is sponsoring a five-year project on values education is truly welcomed.

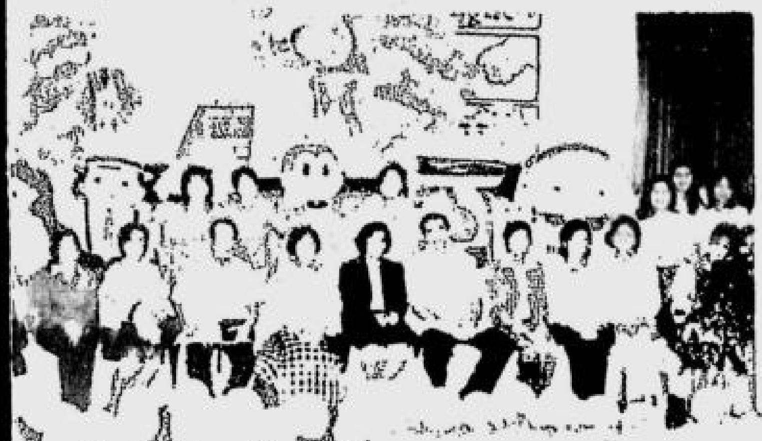
CSantiago
CORAZON D. SANTIAGO
Director IV

One dream, one mission. The partnership is inevitable. Believing in the values they hold dear, Jollibee and the Department of Education teamed up to enhance the values education program for elementary pupils dubbed "Ang Batang Pinoy ay Jollibee Kid"

> "The subjects clustered under the rubric of 'makabayan'- can be complementary to the development of national identity...Jollibee comes at the right time when DepEd needs a partner in values education."
>
> -Dr. Fe A. Hidalgo
> Undersecretary
> Department of Education

> "What a wonderful gift to the children on the 105th anniversary of independence - a values education program!"
>
> -Dr. Cora Santiago
> Regional Director-NCR
> Department of Education

This is the Dream Team we've all been waiting for.



[illegible]

Officials of Mary Lindbert International, Jollibee's school program management team

Jollibee with Department of Education undersecretaries, regional directors, superintendents, supervisors, school principals and teachers

The Dream Team of the Filipino youth!

Ang Batang Pinoy ay Jollibee KID

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Progressive scan In the same period of time, the beam makes two complete passes of all 480 lines in sequence. Available screen resolution is maximized, and the picture is brighter and smoother.

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From page D1

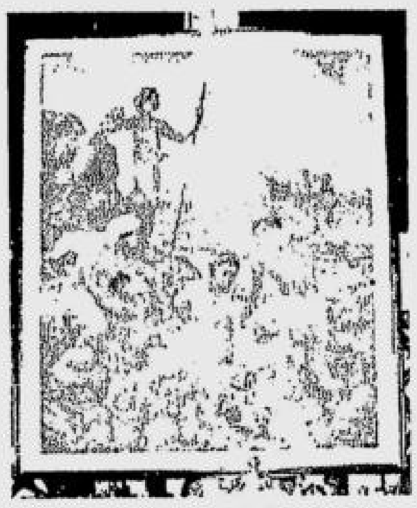
early days of the American régime in the Philippines.

Soon after the turn of the last century, the eminent American architect Daniel Burnham was sent to the Islands to plan Manila and Baguio. Burnham planned Manila on the Parisian model with grand boulevards interlaced with a vast park system. The Luneta was to be the centerpiece of the park system. And on one side of the Luneta, the principal landmark was to be our Manila Hotel. She had pride of place, standing alone facing the Army Navy Club and Elks Club on the opposite side of the park.

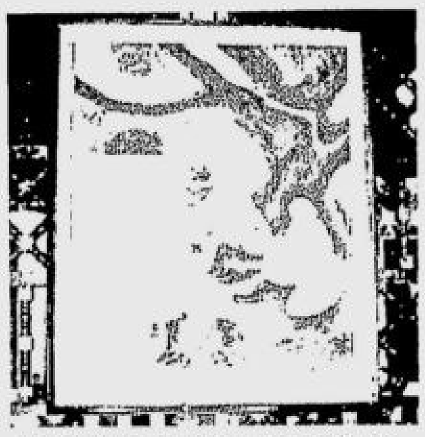
Burnham returned to the United States and eventually became one of the pillars of American architecture. His assistant, William Parsons, stayed, designed our Manila Hotel and other significant Manila buildings. Parsons was a few years out of venerable, exclusive Yale University where he received his architectural training. Could it be said that the foundation of our Manila Hotel springs from the Ivy League tradition? Whether that postulation should be taken seriously or not, without doubt our Manila Hotel has architectural pedigree.

Elegance and understatement

Breeding? I know what a lot of people liked about our Manila Hotel was her total elegance that she approached with complete understatement. There was never any flash to her. She needed no flash because she was to the manor born. Elegance always surrounded her, it was matter of fact and therefore nothing to flaunt. The old rich are bred that, and that was what our Manila Hotel used to be.



OCCUPYING pride of place in the main lobby is an exceptional Amorsolo painting.



A FAUX Amorsolo hangs beside the real one in the lobby, trivializing the Filipino master.

She continued to remain unassuming after her National Artist architect and her internationally respected foreign interior design team won major awards for their refurbishment of the hotel during the heady Imeldific days. Awards notwithstanding, she remained understated although getting her luster back.

Among all of the new hotels simultaneously built under Imelda's wing that year, our Manila Hotel stood apart in a class of its own. When tout Manille flocked back to our Manila Hotel for special occasions, each guest felt special in her Old World surroundings. She was the pinnacle that all of the new Imelda-built hotels were aspiring to reach but none of them ever got there.

Those were proud days for us. Our Grande Dame ranked right up there with the Raffles of Singapore and the Peninsula of Hong Kong. She was world-class.

Permanence? Of course our Manila Hotel had permanence. Her heritage tells us that. Since 1910 she was the premier hotel in the Philippines, where each national figure from the American governors-general to all of the Philippine presidents held official meetings, where they entertained kings and queens, presidents and prime ministers, including a number of heavyweight Hollywood stars. If you weren't billeted or entertained at our Manila Hotel, you had no claim to being a true VIP.

History was made at our Manila Hotel. General MacArthur lived there for years. The Manila Rotary held its first meeting there and continues to meet there up to this day. Marcos loyalists occupied and trashed the hotel in 1986 during the first attempted coup against the Aquino people-power government. So many events have happened there. She has been in the center of history long enough to merit its declaration as a historic site.

Many Filipinos hold personal memories of intimate dinners or functions at our Manila Hotel, making it a place of collective memories for the general public. No question about it, our Manila Hotel has been part of the Filipino life for a long time. It has history. It has got heritage.

Indignity

Dignity? Where has our dignity gone? Now approaching her centennial, Manila Hotel should all the more have the respect that a Grande Dame deserves. Instead, what happened to her was a crime. She fell into bad company.

She fell in with a group of people without any respect for her, who removed all of her grace and dignity, who took shameless advantage of her and who tarted her up with paste diamonds set in thin sheets of gold-colored brass. Look at her now, a Grande Dame now decked out like a floozy. And because of that, what happened? Nobody takes her seriously any more.

None of her friends had the courage to tell her. It is about time to let her know. Let her know that it is time for her to recapture her lost glory. Let her know that she has allowed herself to be trivialized, and that the trivialization insults her stature of being part of the national heritage all Filipinos share.

You see, each Filipino has a stake in his country's heritage. He has a psychic ownership over the entire range of his heritage from the Rice Terraces to Vigan and certainly including Manila Hotel. Owners of heritage sites are simply the site's caretakers. Therefore our Manila Hotel is an intrinsic part of our national heritage. We all have a stake in it. It is our Manila Hotel and the Filipino nation has the right to a strong voice in its preservation.

Based on the legal rounds that the hotel was part of Filipino heritage and only Filipinos were capable of caring for their own heritage, a winning bid by a foreign company was revoked and the bid awarded to a Filipino.

Now look at what Filipino care has done to our Manila Hotel. Manila Hotel is going the way of the rest of our national heritage, down the drain.

E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com

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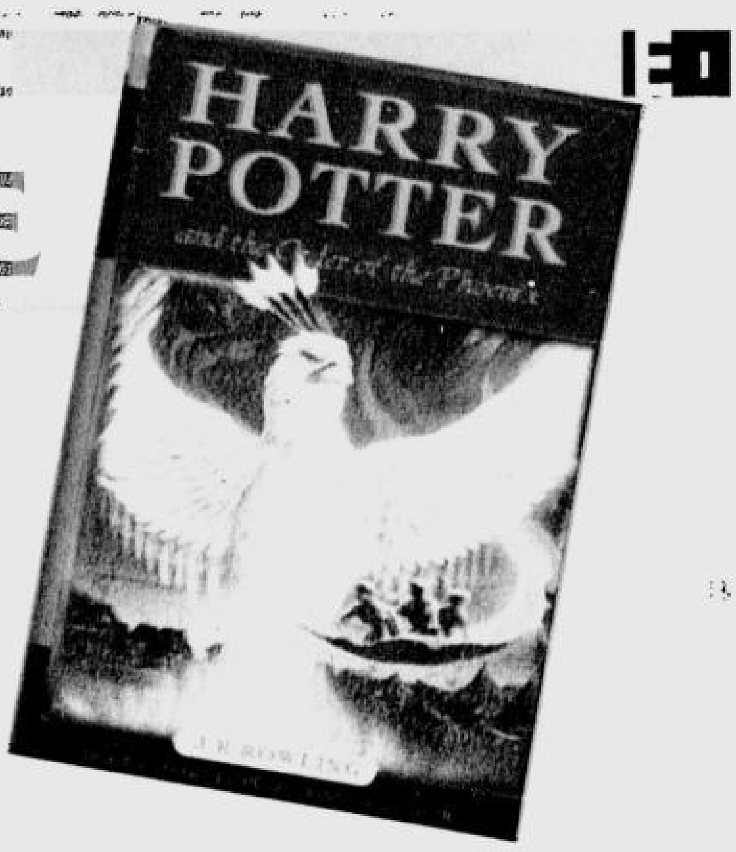
Books LifeStyle

New ‘Potter’ book may not be magic enough for sluggish book sales



NEW YORK—US bookstores, facing weak sales and profits, will need more than just Harry Potter’s wizardry to turn around their business as there is also concern that the book series may be starting to lose its magic among some fans.

At best, the June 21 launch of “Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix” would lure shoppers into bookstores so they can promote other items to bring relief from the market downturn, analysts said.

A recent survey conducted by J.P. Morgan, points out that some Harry Potter fans do not intend to buy the upcoming edition, possibly signaling that the latest J.K. Rowling installment may struggle to live up to its prelaunch hype.

“Based on our research, we do not believe that the release itself will be enough,” J.P. Morgan analyst Danielle Fox said.

“To us, the biggest surprise from our survey is the fall-off in the intent to purchase [the new book] among existing Harry Potter fans,” Fox said in a report.

Even though pre-orders of the latest Harry Potter have topped a million at online retailer Amazon.com Inc.—as well as thousands more at other book chains like Barnes & Noble Inc. and Borders Group Inc.—J.P. Morgan noted that the book was being heavily discounted, at times 40 percent off the list price of $29.99.

“In sum, we think heavy promotions will be crucial in making the latest Harry Potter release a success,” said Fox.

Fox, in an effort to identify the impact that the new Harry Potter release will have on the book retailing industry, surveyed sixth- and seventh-grade children and their parents.

Roughly 32 respondents, or 91 percent of those surveyed, said they had previously purchased earlier Harry Potter books, but 16 percent of them also said they do not plan to buy the upcoming release, according to the J.P. Morgan report.

Getting a real boost from the new book’s launch may prove elusive for hard-pressed booksellers, according to analysts.

Backed by a multimillion dollar marketing push, the new book boasts over 255,000 words, 38 chapters and about 896 pages, compared to its predecessor “Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire”— released in July 2000—with over 191,000 words, 37 chapters and 752 pages in hardcover.

The US publisher Scholastic Corp. has earmarked an unprecedented 8.5 million copies for the United States alone.

Reuters

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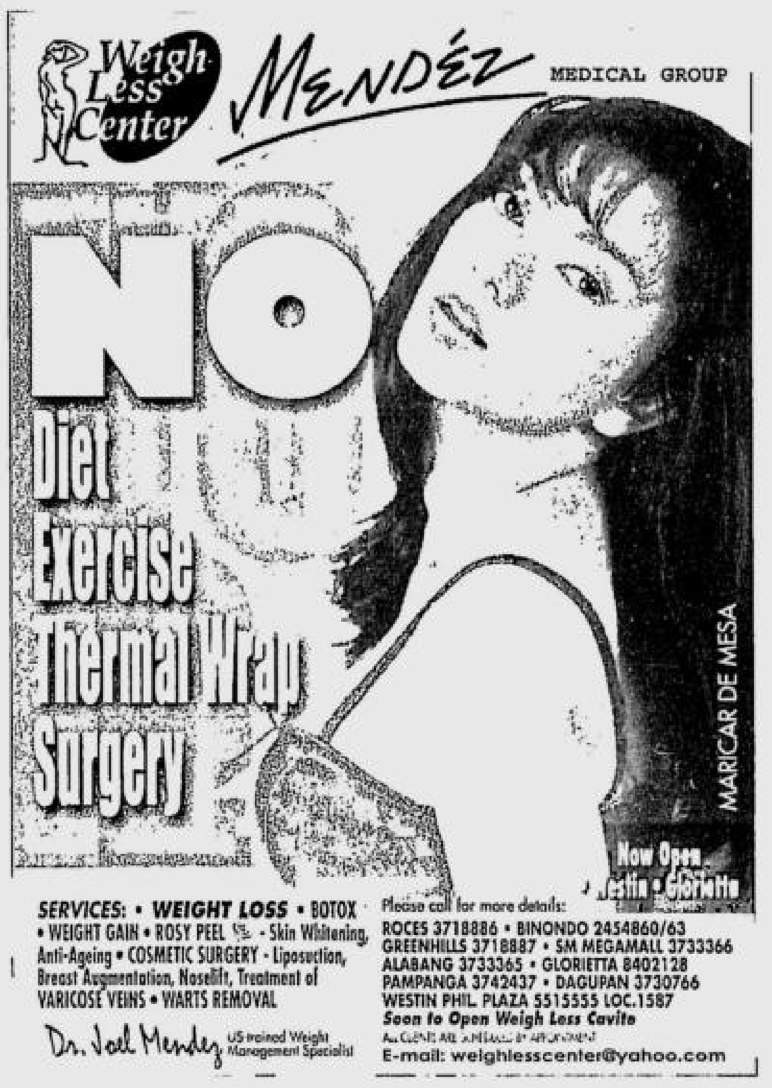
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Graduates to revisit UP Beloved

By Leah Salterio

MANY of today's biggest names in politics, business, government service and even entertainment come from the University of the Philippines.

Graduates recall with fondness and pride their stay at the UP that helped them become successful individuals.

"In UP, students are not afraid to question their professors and say their opinion unlike in sectarian schools," said Reynaldo M. Lesaca, whose class, 1943 (diamond), is among this year's honorees in the UP general alumni-faculty homecoming on June 21, 4 p.m., at the Luciano E. Salazar Hall, Ang Bahay ng Alumni, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

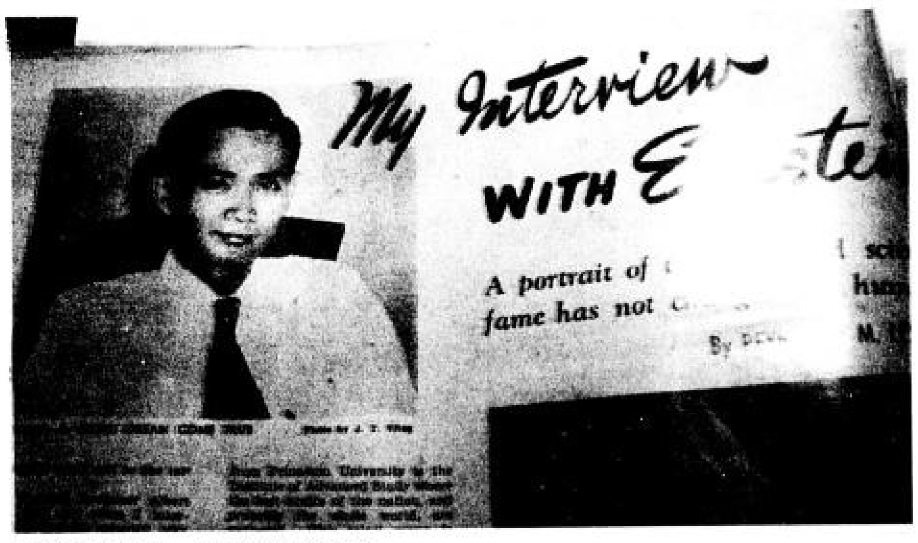
Other honorees are Classes 1953 (golden), 1963 (ruby) and 1977 (silver).

This year's theme is "Population and the Quality of Life of the Filipino."

An integrated production number, showcasing their respective eras, will be presented by the jubilarians. Medallions will be awarded to the diamond jubilarians. Hosting the program are Willie Nepomuceno and Tessie Tomas.

Leading this year's diamond jubilarians is 82-year-old Lesaca, who still lives in the same house on Mabini Street in UP Diliman built in 1947, when the campus opened in Quezon City. Lesaca raised his eight children, including noted pop-jazz violinist John, in the same house.

"I was the one who taught John how to play the violin," said the elder Lesaca, a civil engineering graduate.



My Interview
WITH E
A portrait of
fame has not

LESACA'S interview with Einstein

Lesaca entered UP in 1938, when Jorge Bocobo was the university president. His wife Florinda Jacob, his high-school sweetheart and a native of Lipa, Batangas, is also a UP graduate. She started the kindergarten program in UP.

The couple has been married for 63 years now.

Face-to-face with Einstein

Lesaca, who earned scholarships in American universities, takes pride in being the only Filipino to have interviewed the great scientist Albert Einstein at the Princeton University in New Jersey on Dec. 29, 1947. The interview was published in the "Evening News" in December 1949.

Lesaca, who taught at UP, also served as commissioner of the National Pollution and Control Commission (NPCC) in the '60s.

Other diamond jubilarians are Dr. Virginia R. Nanagas, Dr. Iluminada de la Rosa, Teofila Ofelia Tamesis, Dr. Paula Santos-Umali and Dr. Conrado S. Dayrit, father of Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit.

The golden jubilarians is led by lawyer Hernandez, who is on his third and last year as UPAA president. In March, the UP Alumni Association (UPAA) donated, through the UP system president Francisco Nemenzo, P7 million to the university's library modernization program that aimed to convert files into electronic formats. The amount was on top of the P17 million raised by the board during its term, which will end this month.

Quality of life of Filipinos is this year's homecoming theme

EVIE Escudero, Becky Maronilla, Marita Hernandez, UP alumni association president Eduardo Hernandez, first VP Gari Tiongco, Sol Iglesias, Mian Gancayco and Boots Mejia

It was Hernandez's class that brought Guillermo Tolentino's oblation from UP Padre Faura to Diliman.

Hernandez took up pre-law at UP Iloilo, now UP Visayas. When he moved to Diliman for his law proper in 1948, he recalled there were only two buildings, both used as offices. Classes were conducted in American quonset huts. Dormitories were inherited from the US army, since Diliman was used as an army camp.

DR. Reynaldo Lesaca, diamond jubilarian

Open-air shower

"When it rained, we had no classes because we couldn't hear what the professor was saying anymore," Hernandez said. "Our shower was open air, and there was only canvas to cover you."

Hernandez and wife Matilde Montinola have five children who all went to UP.

Among his fellow graduates are Sen. Juan Ponce-Enrile, retired Supreme Court Justice Abdulwahid Bidin, Court of Appeals Justice Nathanael de Pano, former Executive Secretary Ponciano Mathay, Dr. Rafael Salas, the first Filipino undersecretary-general of the United Nations, and the late Sen. Mamintal Tamano.

Maria Anicia "Boots" Mejia, one-time INQUIRER vice president, obtained her Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from UP in 1978.

"It was the age of salsa, 12-set or the maski-pops for the terpsichoreally challenged," she said. "We were listening to the Fifth Dimension, Diana Ross, Supremes, and even Rico J and Sampaguita. We also watched Woody Allen movies.

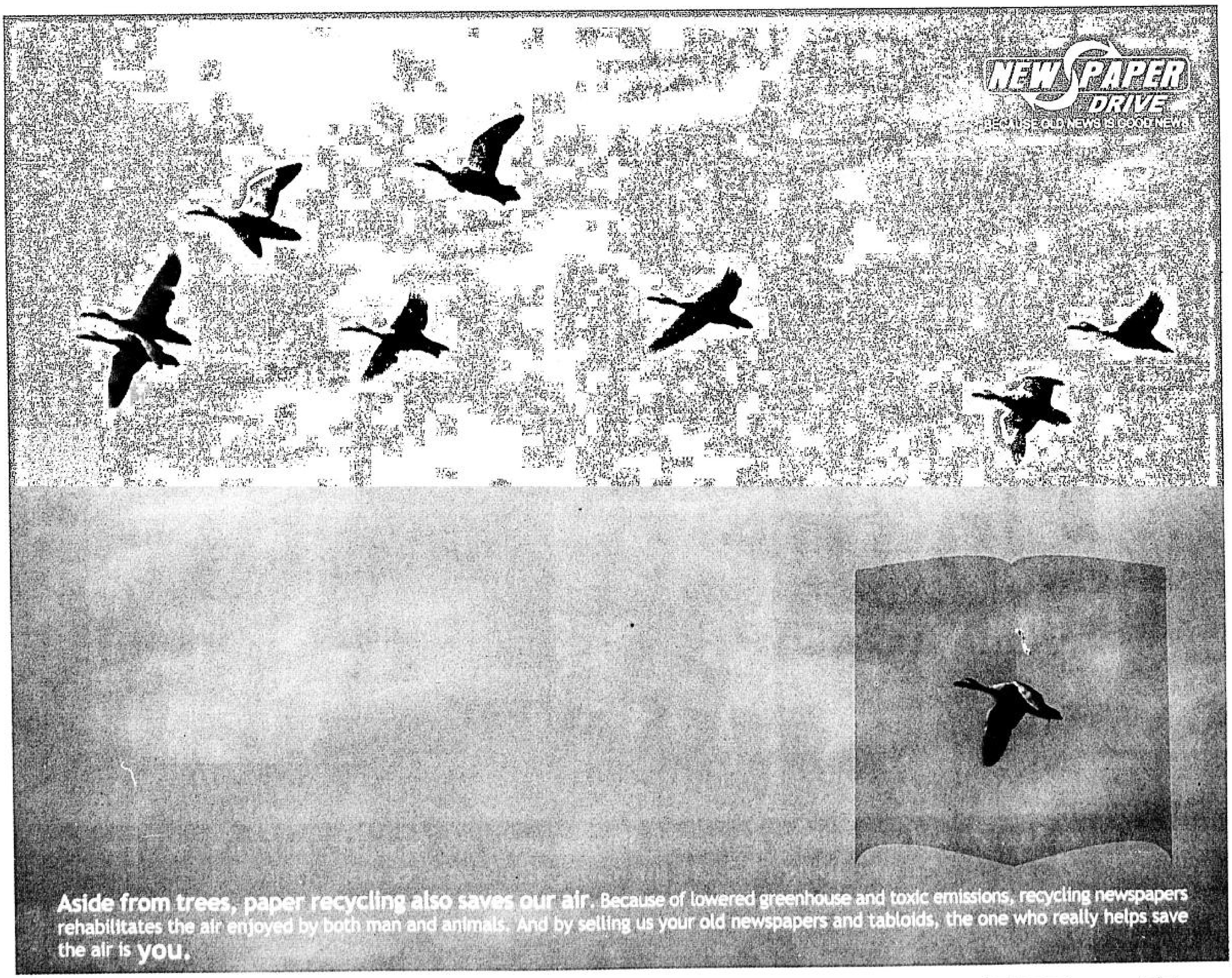
"The youths wore bell-bottoms, cheesecloth (read: see-through) and bead chokers. You weren't from the '70s if you didn't own a puka shell necklace."

Among her classmates were Gen. Edgar Aglipay and Gen. George Alinio; Ed Alvarez, who is now president of Orix Metro Leasing, the biggest finance company in Japan; Salvador Escaño, president of Price Development; Butch Garcia, a partner at Sycip, Gorres, Velayo and Company; Victor Manarang, president of Extraordinary Development Corporation; Fred Rosal, a lawyer; Belen Buensuceso-Tan, now senior vice president for corporate planning of San Miguel Corporation; Josie Agloro, executive vice president of Hermes Shipping; and Jun Sabog, associate professor in management at Ateneo de Manila University.

Mejia met her husband, Oscar, then finance manager of the Construction and Development Corporation of the Philippines (CDCP), in the same college.

Mejia was vice president of Far East Chemco Leasing and Finance Corporation, a joint venture of Far East Bank and Chemical Bank of New York, when she enrolled in graduate school.

This year's homecoming awardees include Sen. Franklin M. Drilon, most distinguished alumnus; Commissioner Haydee B. Yorac, most distinguished alumna; lawyer Ponciano Mathay and Prof. Amelia Lapeña Bonifacio, lifetime distinguished achievements; GMA-7 president Felipe L. Gozon, information technology and mass communication; and Behn Cervantes for theater arts.



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

A day of hope, a year of heroism

From page E4

self and think of others, subjugate your personal interest for the greater good. Let us minimize impressing others with shallow and senseless displays of rhetoric. The world loves people who do the right thing at the right time: people who will do the right thing even when no one is looking.

"We strongly and proudly enlist ourselves as workers and soldiers of the Education Revolution, and partner-mentors to the millions of Filipinos who hunger for national dignity and prosperity."

UP and the Revolution

"I greatly admire the Grade I teacher because [when she teaches] she walks not in front, or behind, but beside the child," says Dr. Leticia Peñano Ho, dean of the University of the Philippines College of Education.

She hopes to bring the college closer to the public school. The UP College of Education has been helping the public schools in many ways, from training volunteer teachers under the Gurong Pahinungod program to strengthening the teachers' grasp of curriculum integration.

"We've trained thousands of public school teachers on curriculum integration. [Given their teaching environment], *talagang magagaling sila, kaya dapat silang suportahan,"* Dr. Ho said.

Dr. Ho, her college and the UP Task Force on Curriculum Integration, are doing just that through the Education Revolution School Empowerment program. They have been helping public school teachers acquire skills to help their students learn better.

Curriculum integration looks for ways to interrelate subjects. Students learn better because the subjects support one another. A concept introduced in one subject is reinforced in another.

The UP Task Force on Curriculum Integration banks on the expertise of people like Dr. Felicitas Pado (reading), Dean Mauricia Borromeo of the UP College of Music, Dr. Vilma Resuma (content-based instruction), Dr. Celinia Balonso, Dr. Lydia Agno, Dr. Noni Gabala and Prof. Delia Zoco.

Thank you

The FWWP thanks Agnes Grace Perez for joining the fight for quality education in public schools. People like her only serve to spur FWWP to work even harder.

Ms Perez. *Mabuhay po kayo!*

DR. Letty Peñano Ho with Dr. Eden Kelemen (center) and UST College of Education Dean Dr. Clotilde Arcangel

SUPT. Ida Endonilla (extreme right) with Mentoring the Mentors national coordinator Dr. Evelyn Mejillano (center) and Dr. Celia Adriano

DR. Vilma Resuma shares her expertise on content-based instruction.

LAUNCHING of the

10th Johnson & Johnson Outstanding Midwives Award of the Philippines

They are known as the frontline health workers who provide vital health services to our people, especially mothers, infants and children. They are the Filipino midwives who are virtually omnipresent in their communities, playing myriad roles as health advocates, teachers, leaders and friends. These individuals embody the characteristics of a modern-day hero committed to promoting health and delivering basic health care services to Filipino families all over the country.

The Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines (IMAP), Inc. and Johnson & Johnson (Philippines), Inc. continue to herald the achievements of the Filipino midwives and mark a milestone as they launch the 10th Johnson & Johnson Outstanding Midwives Award of the Philippines.

All licensed and practicing government and private midwives are eligible for the award and are encouraged to join.

Candidates must be actively involved in the delivery of midwifery and other health services to their constituents at least 80% of their time. The midwives can be nominated by any government agency, private civic organization, religious group, non-government organization, licensed doctor or barangay chairman.

Nomination forms are available at IMAP regional and local chapters/offices and at the IMAP national headquarters at Pinaglabanan corner Ejercito Streets, San Juan, Metro Manila (telefax no. (02) 724-4849; email address: imapinc@mozcom.com) as well as from Perceptions, Inc. at 3rd Floor Fortune Office Building, 160 Legaspi Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City (tel. nos. (02) 891-3396 / 891-3485 / 891-3556 & fax no. 891-3431). Nominations must be submitted to all IMAP chapters not later than July 31, 2003 and by August 15, 2003 at the IMAP national headquarters.

The ten awardees will receive P20,000.00 cash, a specially designed trophy, an awardee pin, a special midwife's field bag, a one-year supply of Johnson & Johnson products, round-trip transportation from home base, accommodations and free registration to the 29th IMAP annual convention in October 2003 in Tagaytay City.

Affirming their commitment to the improvement of maternal and child health care, the Johnson & Johnson companies in the Philippines serve as sponsors of the award. These are Johnson & Johnson (Philippines), Inc., Johnson & Johnson Medical Philippines and Janssen Pharmaceutica.

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Per DTI-NCR permit no 1539. Series of 2003.

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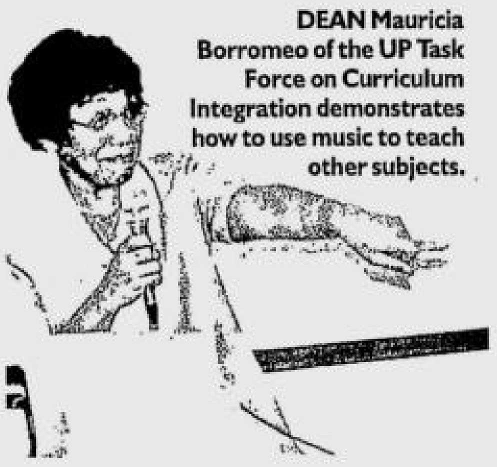
WELCOME TO:
THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION: MENTORING THE MENTORS PROGRAM

"CHANGE must start with the school leaders and managers," according to principals and master teachers of Iloilo City.

EDUCATION REVOLUTION

A day of hope, a year of heroism

By Butch Hernandez
Contributor



DEAN Mauricia Borromeo of the UP Task Force on Curriculum Integration demonstrates how to use music to teach other subjects.

FOR ABOUT 500,000 public school teachers, this school year gives them a chance to be heroes yet again in the face of tremendous odds.

We hope that this year brings something different for them.

The Education Revolution is being waged on several fronts. In many places, from small towns to large cities, people are asking what they can do to help.

The Foundation for Worldwide People's Power's (FWWP) answer is simple: Make your community act as one. Help our children get the quality education they deserve. Adopt your public school!

Think of others

Lea J. Jurilla, principal of Balantang Elementary School in Iloilo City, attended recently a session of the Education Revolution Mentoring the Mentors Program with 50 other principals and master teachers. The group issued the following statement as its collective response to the challenges of this school year.

"So much water has gone under the bridge since the ouster of dictators in our country. Moral recovery programs sprung up one after the other, but they left the scene without leaving any imprint. We were invited to a crusade only to realize that it served just a few with special interests. So we thought, this country was going to the dogs.

"We have a gut feeling that this Education Revolution is it, because of its focus on social transformation... we all know the sad reality (i.e. the problems of our education system and the country), but instead of hiding from it, we are challenged to fight it... we believe that change must start with the school leaders and managers.

"This now is our response: Forget your-

A DAY/ E3

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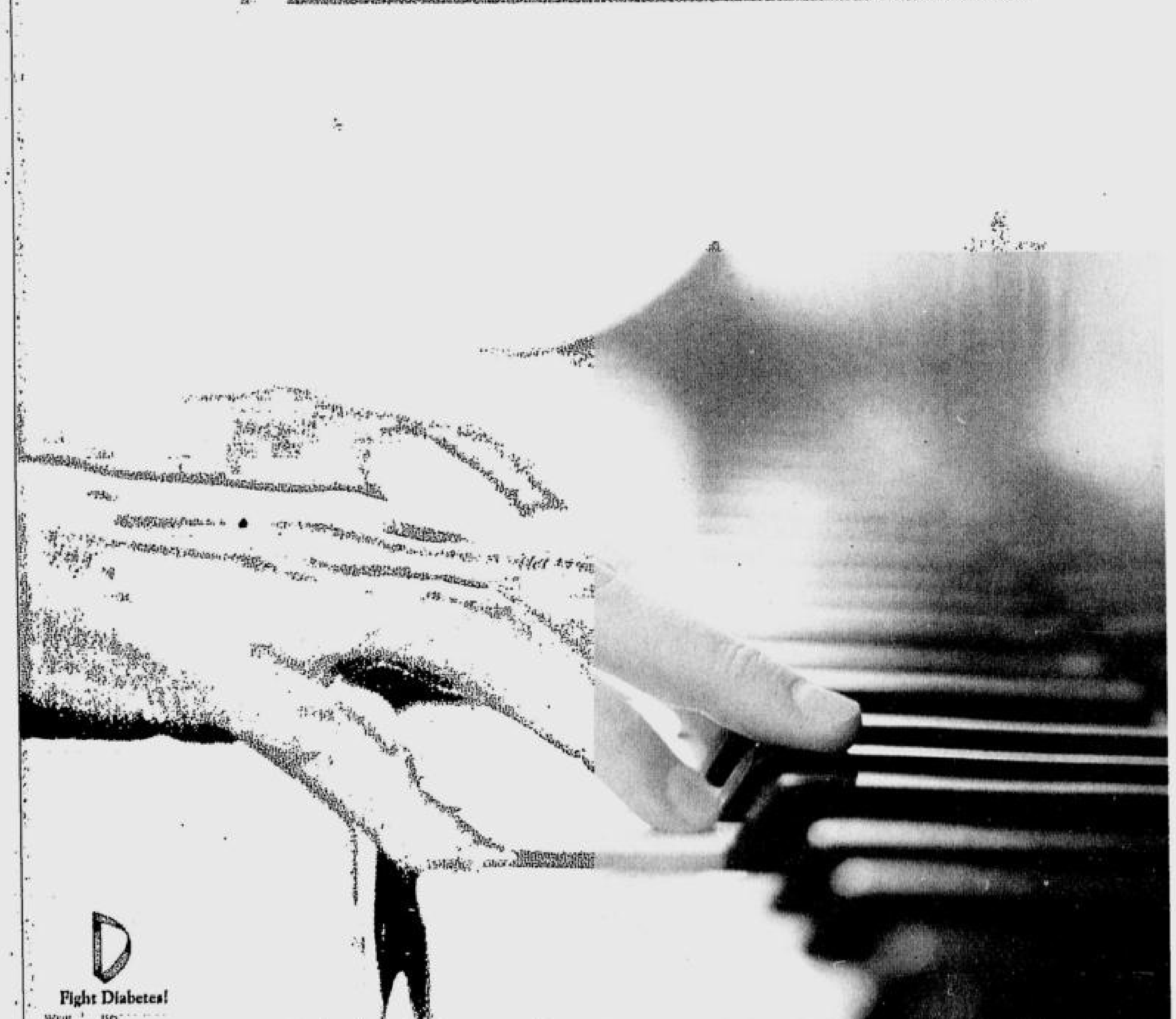

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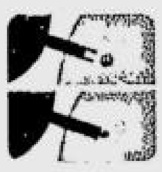

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Inside 'Pinay-Sex.com'

Tikoy Aguiluz creates a groundbreaking digital film about cybersex

FIL-AM actress Juliana Palermo plays Joanna, who falls into the dark world of cybersex.

By Heinz Bulos
Contributor

A SEMI-NAKED woman is gyrating on the screen while the tune "Limbo Rock" is playing. But it looks like the scene is being played within a Web browser. Cut to another scene of a police raid. But there's a sniper cross-hair at the center, just like the Counter Strike video game.

Welcome to the world of "Pinay-Sex.com," which could very well be the most audacious and groundbreaking movie of maverick filmmaker Amable "Tikoy" Aguiluz.

This is the first Filipino movie to tackle the hot-button topic of cybersex. More importantly, as Aguiluz points out, it's the "first DV to be shown commercially." Aguiluz is making movie history with "Pinay-Sex.com"

Despite the soft-porn flick image the movie conjures, Aguiluz says his movie is simply a love story, with a twist. "It's about the conflict between the virtual and real worlds. The premise is that love is the only redemption."

Aguiluz has been trying to put together a digital movie for the last four years, ever since he started the highly successful international film festival, Cinemanila. "But no one's buying," he states, "no one wants to show it commercially."

Cooking up a revolution

The idea for the story came when a local Internet porn ring was raided by the National Bureau of Investigation and exposed to the media in December 2002. It was the perfect plot for a digital movie. Aguiluz quickly developed a story and hired two young, up-and-coming screenwriters who have a better grasp of Internet culture to come up with the script: Angelo "Sarge" Lacuesta, a Palanca awardee, and Jasmin Coles, a finalist in last year's Cinemanila scriptwriting competition.

He put together his crew, including director of photography Yadi Sugandi, film editor Mirana Medina, and production designer Hector Petilla to come up with a fresh visual approach.

He rounded up reliable actors Gary Estrada (as Rick, owner of an Internet café cum online brothel, Webdiva.com), Rey "PJ" Abellana (as Marcus, an NBI agent), Angelu de Leon, Carlo Maceda and Peter Nery. He even got broadcast news celebrity Ces Drilon for a bit part.

After a long search, he found the actress to play Joanna, the 18-year-old Fil-Am whose life goes astray when she falls into the dark world of cybersex, where "love is a click and a credit-card number away." Juliana Palermo is a Filipina-American with no acting experience at all; she auditioned just for fun. The dusky, well-endowed and liberated beauty fit the role perfectly and gave a convincing performance.

Aguiluz also found "an investor willing to gamble." Maverick Films head honcho Eric Cuatico previously produced Aguiluz's critically acclaimed hit, "Segurista."

Going digital

The appeal of digital video to filmmakers like Aguiluz is obvious. It's perfect for guerrilla-style filmmaking. One major selling point for DV is its flexibility and mobility. DV camcorders are lighter and easier to move around. Aguiluz explains, "We can shoot easily. We can go anywhere. We just need a small crew. We shoot with available light."

This low-cost, digital approach to filmmaking (which is an oxymoron, if you come to think of it) gives directors more creative control. "You can't do that with 35-mm film," points Aguiluz.

With a more expensive budget, producers

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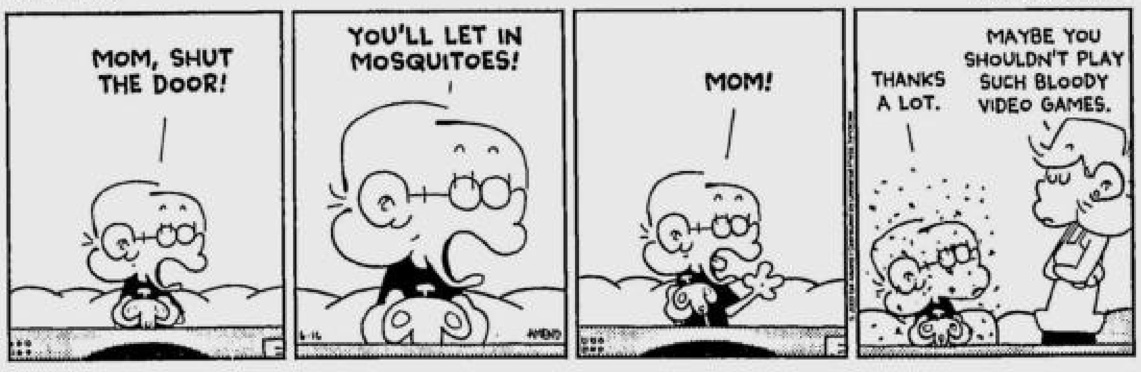
Promo is from May 16 to August 15, 2003. See poster for details. *Approved by DTI-NCR Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1161, Series of 2003

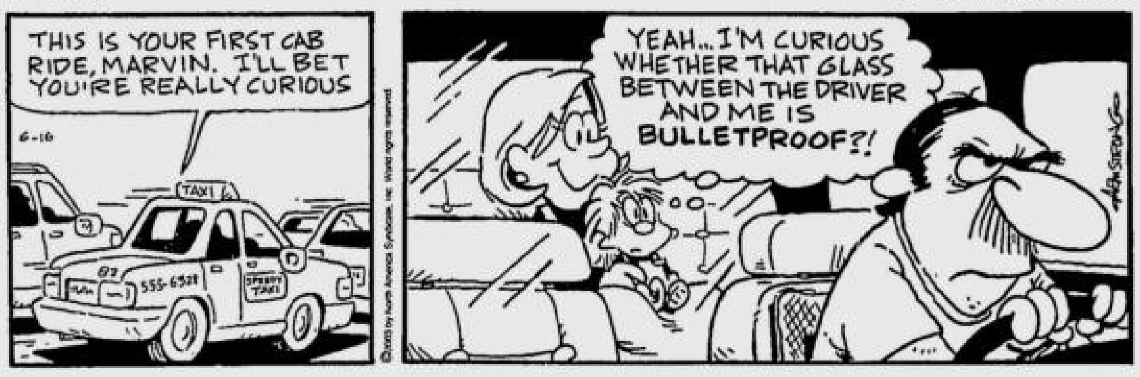
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


MOM, SHUT THE DOOR!
YOU'LL LET IN MOSQUITOES!
MOM!
THANKS A LOT.
MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T PLAY SUCH BLOODY VIDEO GAMES.

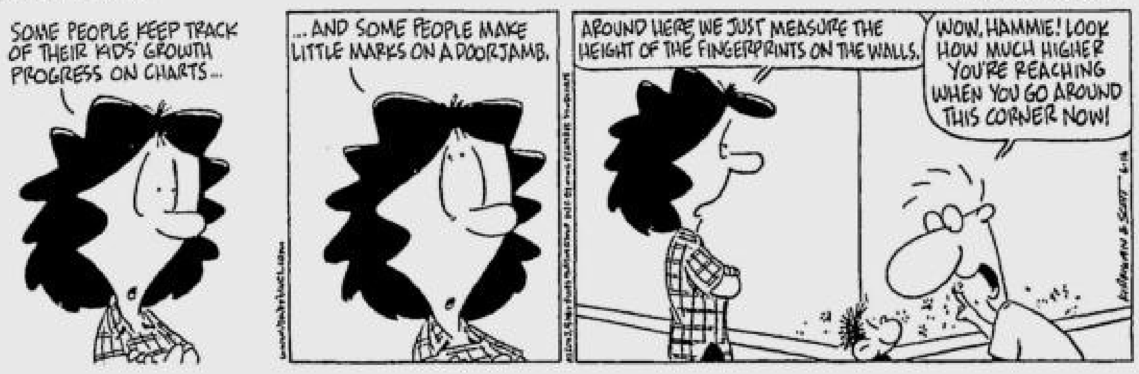
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THIS IS YOUR FIRST CAB RIDE, MARVIN. I'LL BET YOU'RE REALLY CURIOUS
6-16
TAXI
555-6328
YEAH... I'M CURIOUS WHETHER THAT GLASS BETWEEN THE DRIVER AND ME IS BULLETPROOF?!

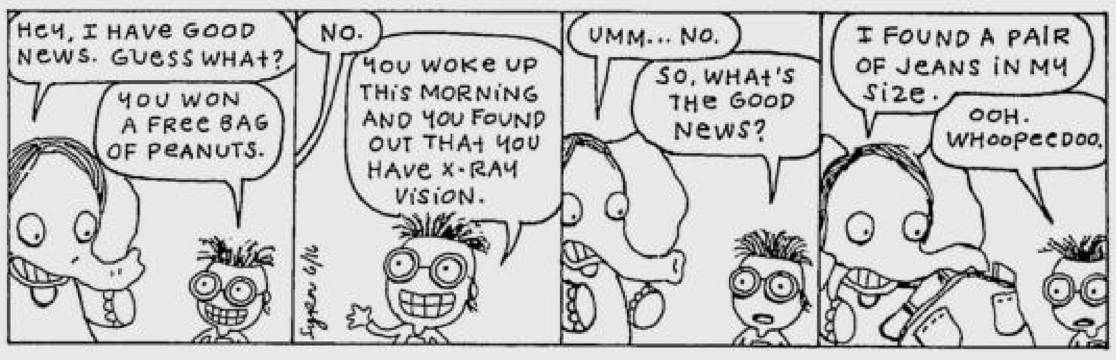
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


SOME PEOPLE KEEP TRACK OF THEIR KIDS' GROWTH PROGRESS ON CHARTS...
... AND SOME PEOPLE MAKE LITTLE MARKS ON A DOORJAMB.
AROUND HERE WE JUST MEASURE THE HEIGHT OF THE FINGERPRINTS ON THE WALLS.
WOW, HAMMIE! LOOK HOW MUCH HIGHER YOU'RE REACHING WHEN YOU GO AROUND THIS CORNER NOW!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, I have good news. Guess what?
You won a free bag of peanuts.
No.
You woke up this morning and you found out that you have X-ray vision.
Umm... No.
So, what's the good news?
I found a pair of jeans in my size.
Ooh. Whoopeedoo.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are curious about practically every aspect of life. In addition, you are also very physical in your approach to your world. Because of your strong skills, you easily persuade others to follow you. You feel strongly responsible to family and your community. The year ahead is full of exciting new beginnings in many areas.
Birthdate of: Venus Williams, tennis player; Barry Manilow, singer; Jason Patric, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a very busy time for you. Fortunately, your social skills are extremely strong right now. You easily charm everyone -- especially siblings and relatives. Enjoy chatting with others.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You love beautiful things, and now you want to buy some of them. The problem always is that there is too much month left at the end of the money. Good luck.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Three planets are now in your sign. This empowers you enormously! Your confidence now matches your aroused ambition. By all means, go after what you want.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Despite your desire to travel and expand your world right now, you need quiet time to rest. Indulge your need for solitude by slipping away somewhere for a few gentle moments.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your popularity rating is extremely high this week. Enjoy friends, especially younger and artistic people. Accept all invitations.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You are definitely noticed now, for some reason. Use this influence for good, and be patient with partners and close friends. You are a role model for others at this time.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Do anything that expands your world through travel and study. Visit bookstores, libraries and museums, and talk to people from distant places and other cultures.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your ability to research and ferret out facts is excellent now. You are determined to get to the bottom of things. Nobody can hide anything from you!

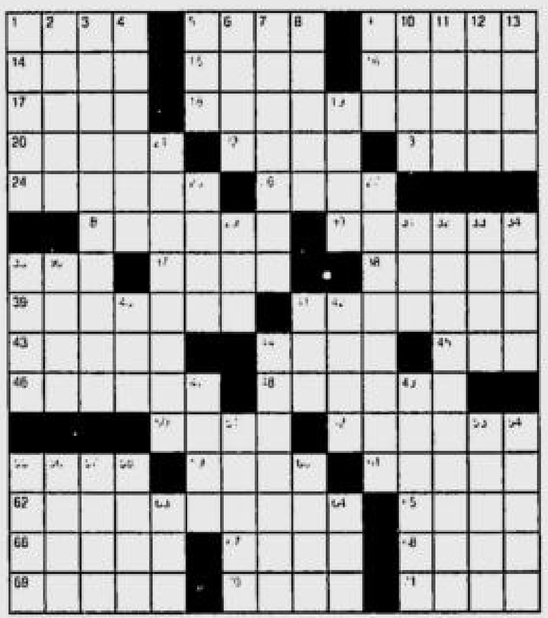
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You can learn a lot from close friends and partners today. Listen to what others are saying. There is a deeper message for you than what their words might convey.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): By all means, capitalize on your urge to get organized. Purchase the necessary equipment and material to store and record whatever you need in the future. You'll be glad you did!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your creative skills are in top form today. Playful activities with children are particularly delightful, as well. Enjoy being a kid again yourself.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a wonderful day to buy something beautiful to enhance your home. Similarly, you might want to buy a treat for a family member. Good feelings abound now within your domestic sphere.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Jack Hammond
Savannah, GA
6/16/03

ACROSS
1 Young whale
5 Without in Bordeaux
9 Guitar holder
14 Melville novel
15 Sheep fat
16 Maine campus
17 Playwright Hart
18 Vieux Carre site
20 Word with band or ring
22 Ancient harp
23 Picture of a physician?
24 Doddering
26 Skip over
28 Porch swing
30 Hung in loose folds
35 Actress Ruby
37 Weasel's relative
38 Chilling
39 Emory University site
41 Johnson Space Center site
43 Steel-plow developer
44 __ Fifth Avenue
45 Lethal letters
46 Aid
48 Way out
50 Poet Teasdale
52 Saudi __
55 Swift pace
59 Fancy hotel
61 Smarted
62 Anacostia River site
65 Cogito __ sum
66 Blanched
67 Cinder ending?
68 Elbe tributary
69 Paddle
70 Bound
71 Auto-racing org.

DOWN
1 Toothed strips
2 Love Italian-style
3 Griffith Park site
4 Archaeologist's find
5 IRS ID
6 "The Clan of the Cave Bear" author
7 MOMA site
8 Tempest
9 Impresario Hurok
10 "Bang a Gong (Get It On)" band
11 Crowd sound
12 Writer Quindlen
13 Nosegay
19 Tim or Beryl
21 Trim shape
25 Polish prose
27 Pants
29 Former queen of Spain
31 Response: abbr.
32 Golden Triangle site
33 MBA course
34 Concavity
35 Arp's art
36 Nice summers?
40 Onassis, to pals
41 Crone
42 Gumbo veggie
44 Space Needle site
47 Mountain lake
49 Lustrous cloth
51 Star in Orion
53 Actress Stevens
54 Greek market
55 "__ the night before..."
56 Grate
57 Employee safety grp.
58 In that case
60 Writer Emile
63 Squid defense
64 Doze

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

C	R	O	S	S	E	S	U	P	■	S	M	O	T	E
A	E	R	O	P	L	A	N	E	■	C	O	N	A	N
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A	D	E	S	■	■	L	O	R	G	N	E	T	T	E
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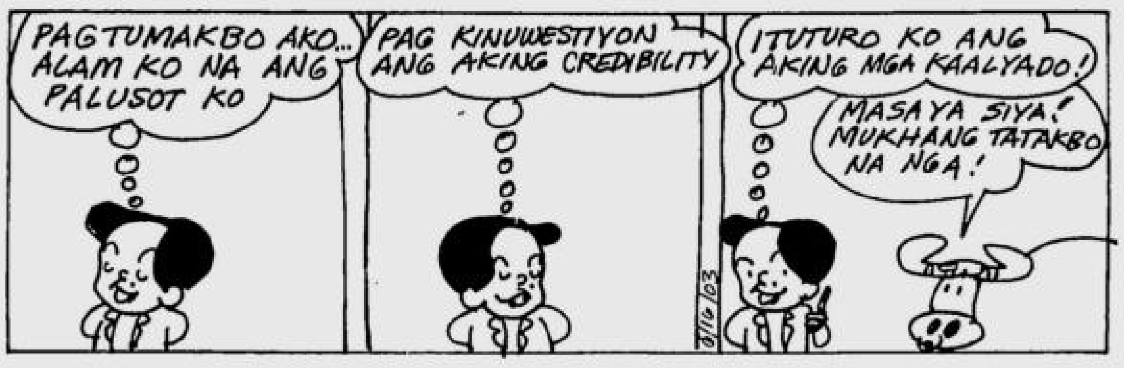
6/16/03

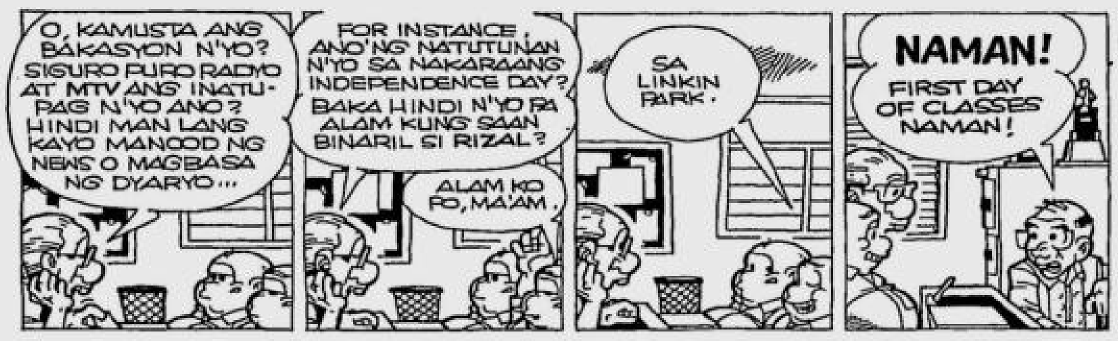
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PAGTUMAKBO AKO... ALAM KO NA ANG PALUSOT KO
PAG KINUWESTIYON ANG AKING CREDIBILITY
ITUTURO KO ANG AKING MGA KAALYADO!
MASAYA SIYA! MUKHANG TATAKBO NA NGA!
6/16/03

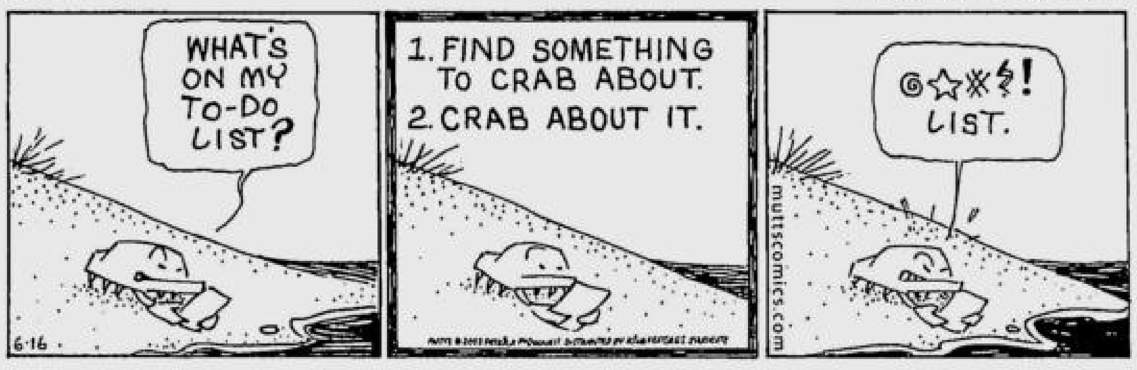
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


O, KAMUSTA ANG BAKASYON N'YO? SIGURO PURO RADYO AT MTV ANG INATUPAG N'YO ANO? HINDI MAN LANG KAYO MANOOD NG NEWS O MAGBASA NG DYARYO...
FOR INSTANCE, ANO'NG NATUTUNAN N'YO SA NAKARAANG INDEPENDENCE DAY? BAKA HINDI N'YO PA ALAM KUNG SAAN BINARIL SI RIZAL?
ALAM KO PO, MA'AM.
SA LINKIN PARK.
NAMAN!
FIRST DAY OF CLASSES NAMAN!

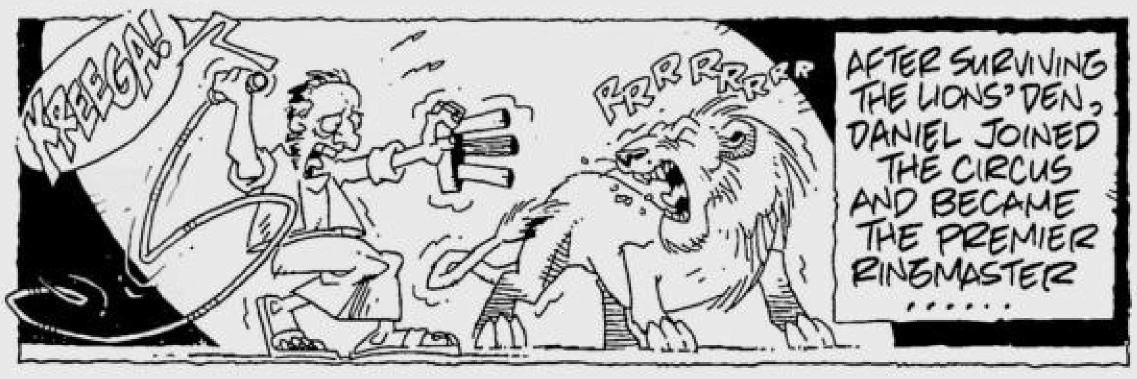
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT'S ON MY TO-DO LIST?
1. FIND SOMETHING TO CRAB ABOUT.
2. CRAB ABOUT IT.
@☆※$! LIST.
6-16
muttscomics.com

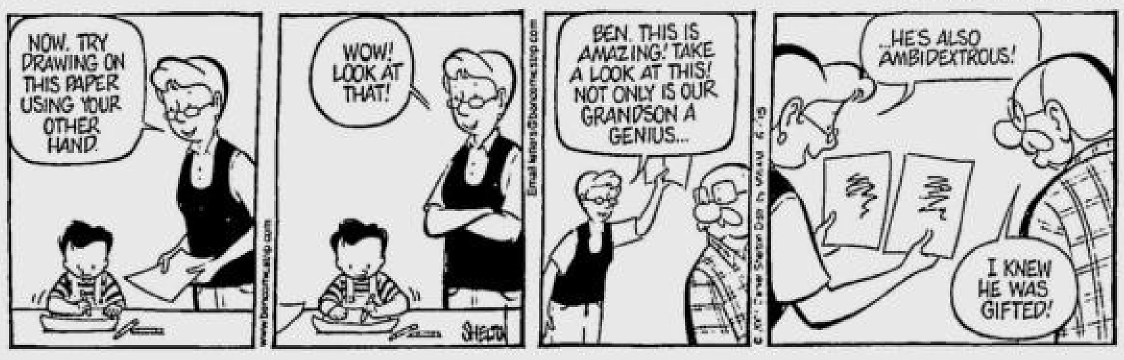
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


KREEGA!
RRRRRRRR
AFTER SURVIVING THE LIONS' DEN, DANIEL JOINED THE CIRCUS AND BECAME THE PREMIER RINGMASTER ......

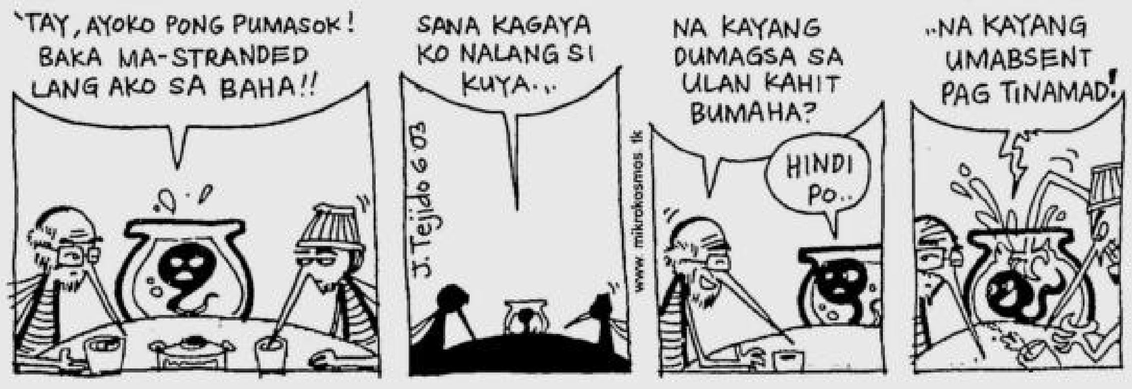
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


NOW. TRY DRAWING ON THIS PAPER USING YOUR OTHER HAND.
WOW! LOOK AT THAT!
BEN. THIS IS AMAZING! TAKE A LOOK AT THIS! NOT ONLY IS OUR GRANDSON A GENIUS...
..HE'S ALSO AMBIDEXTROUS!
I KNEW HE WAS GIFTED!

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


'TAY, AYOKO PONG PUMASOK! BAKA MA-STRANDED LANG AKO SA BAHA!!
SANA KAGAYA KO NALANG SI KUYA..
J. Tejido 6 03
NA KAYANG DUMAGSA SA ULAN KAHIT BUMAHA?
HINDI PO..
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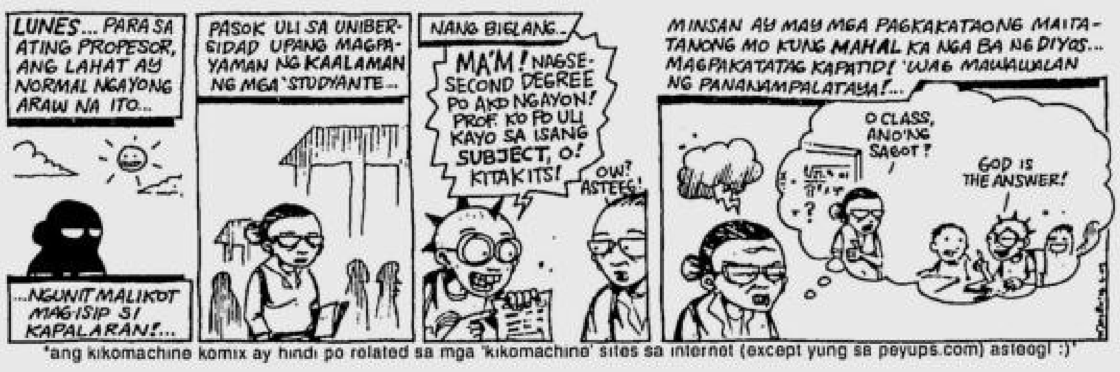
..NA KAYANG UMABSENT PAG TINAMAD!

KIKO MACHINE

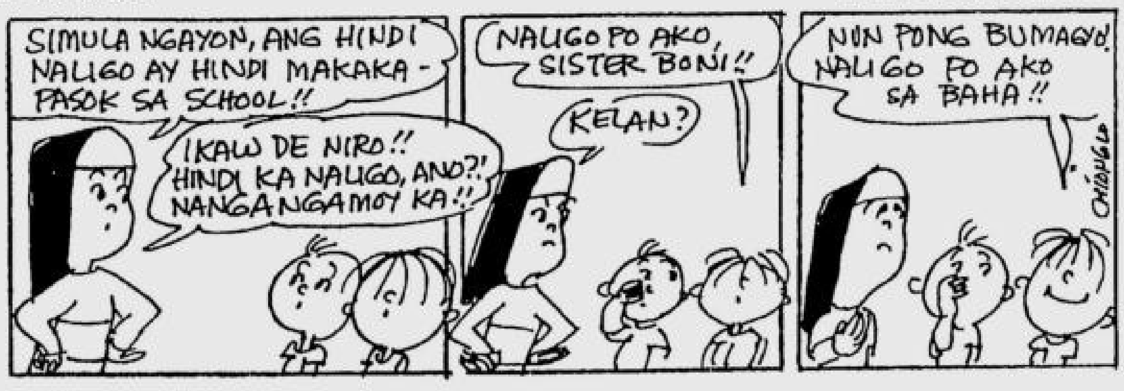
BY MANIX ABRERA


LUNES... PARA SA ATING PROPESOR, ANG LAHAT AY NORMAL NGAYONG ARAW NA ITO...
...NGUNIT MALIKOT MAG-ISIP SI KAPALARAN!...
PASOK ULI SA UNIBERSIDAD UPANG MAGPAYAMAN NG KAALAMAN NG MGA 'STUDYANTE...
NANG BIGLANG...
MA'M! NAGSE-SECOND DEGREE PO AKO NGAYON! PROF. KO PO ULI KAYO SA ISANG SUBJECT, O! KITAKITS!
OW? ASTEEG!
MINSAN AY MAY MGA PAGKAKATAONG MAITATANONG MO KUNG MAHAL KA NGA BA NG DIYOS... MAGPAKATATAG KAPATID! 'WAG MAWAWALAN NG PANANAMPALATAYA!...
O CLASS, ANO'NG SAGOT?
GOD IS THE ANSWER!

*ang kikomachine komix ay hindi po related sa mga 'kikomachine' sites sa internet (except yung sa peyups.com) asteeg! :)

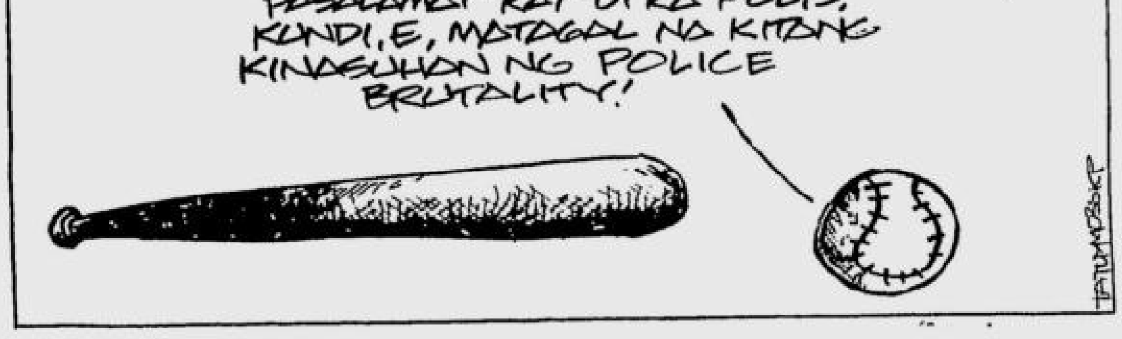
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SIMULA NGAYON, ANG HINDI NALIGO AY HINDI MAKAKAPASOK SA SCHOOL!!
IKAW DE NIRO!! HINDI KA NALIGO, ANO?! NANGANGAMOY KA!!
NALIGO PO AKO, SISTER BONI!!
KELAN?
NUN PONG BUMAGYO! NALIGO PO AKO SA BAHA!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PASALAMAT KA'T DI KA PULIS, KUNDI, E, MATAGAL NA KITANG KINASUHAN NG POLICE BRUTALITY!
TATUMBOBOT

Roman's redemption

In 'The Pianist,' Roman Polanski revisits his harrowing childhood and emerges an artist reborn

By Gibbs Cadiz

REVIEW

SUFFERING and survival, oppression and redemption have always been at the heart of Roman Polanski's cinematic art.

In film after film, the Polish-born director has explored the various ways by which ordinary individuals are forced to cope with horrific, often overwhelming, odds.

In "Rosemary's Baby," Mia Farrow finds out too late in her pregnancy that a cabal of witches has designs on her unborn child. In "Tess," the heroine of Thomas Hardy's novel is betrayed once too many by the men in her life, leading to a murder and an unforgettable early-morning arrest in the misty shadows of the Stonehenge.

Women aren't the only ones who go through Polanski's wringer. Harrison Ford loses a wife and then is chased across slippery Paris rooftops in "Frantic." A then-unknown Hugh Grant becomes the object of kinky, dangerous games by a demented couple in Polanski's 1992 turkey "Bitter Moon."

Then, of course, there is Jack Nicholson as a private eye flailing away at moral and political squalor in prewar California in one of the true classics of cinema, "Chinatown."

Yet even as Polanski was obsessed with suffering and struggle in his films, he hardly worked for audience sympathy or compassion.

There was a palpable nihilism present in many of them, a grim humor that looked at life as one ill-tempered cosmic joke. It was as if, having survived World War II and the banal evil of the Holocaust, Polanski could only respond with a brutal, eviscerating irony.

Nowhere

Such irony is nowhere present in "The Pianist," his latest and no doubt greatest film, and it's a testament to how far Polanski has gone in confronting the hellish torments of his past.

"The Pianist" is the true story of Wladyslaw Szpilman, one of Poland's greatest classical pianists, who was able to survive the annihilation of Polish Jewry by the invading Nazi army in World War II. He lived in Warsaw until his death in 2000 at the age of 88.

Szpilman (played with grave eloquence by Adrien Brody) comes from a comfortably middle-class family of assimilated Jews. In the beginning, he is an indifferent, detached observer, more bemused than outraged at the absurd lengths to which the Nazis would go to inflict insult and injury on ordinary civilians.

Bemusement would soon turn to horror as the city's Jewish population is first barricaded into a cramped ghetto, then shipped off to the gas ovens of Auschwitz and Treblinka.

None of Szpilman's family survives the deportation, but he eludes capture and escapes back to Warsaw. There, he lives out much of the war hidden by sympathetic friends in a series of upscale apartments, forbidden to leave or make a sound.

Up to this point, the film is slow, stark, deliberate. There is an almost documentary-like precision and objectivity to the way Polanski films the methodical extermination of a city and its population.

Unflinching

Against a row of heads made to lie face down on the pavement, with a German soldier calmly putting a bullet through each one, Polanski thrusts his camera unflinchingly.

No music underlines this scene. Any trace of sentimentality has been bleached out. Clearly, this is not "Schindler's List," with its epic shots and omniscient vision. This is one man's vision of hell on earth, a film that springs from private memories seared indelibly in the mind.

What follows next may well be some of the most haunting scenes of survival ever committed to film.

Forced to flee his apartment, Szpilman hides out in a bombed-out hospital, foraging for food in the dead of night in the city's abandoned buildings. Emaciated, dressed in rags, the once-elegant pianist is now a filthy animal limping one step ahead of the Nazi pack.

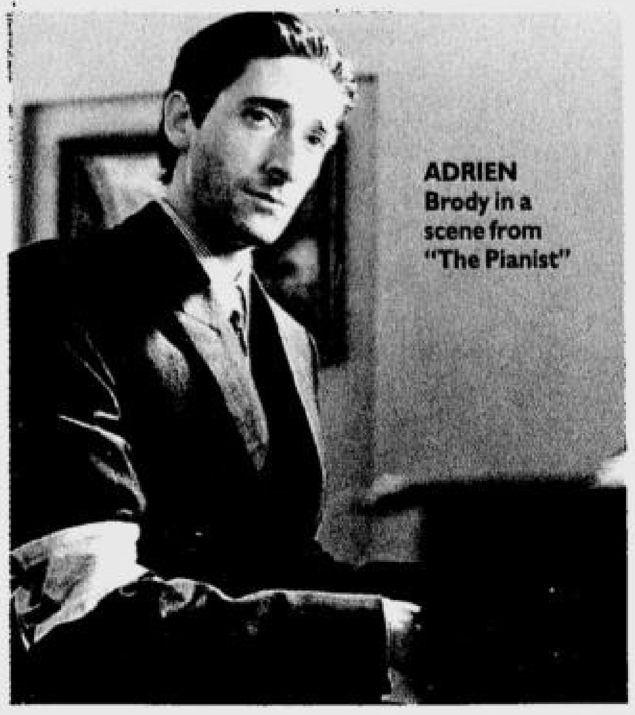
When the camera pulls up to reveal Warsaw's devastated landscape, with Szpilman's puny figure in the foreground, the film achieves a tragic, transcendental grandeur—the very picture of a sick cosmic joke played on a hapless individual.

These scenes resonate with a cumulative power, because we know that in filming them, the director is essentially reliving and coming to terms with his nightmare years.

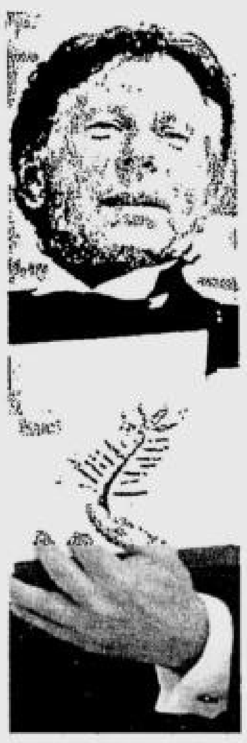
Polanski was only 7 years old when he escaped from the Krakow ghetto through a hole in the barbed wire fence. Like Szpilman, his family (except his father) perished in the war. He did forage for food in the city rubble. And he was made the object of target practice by German soldiers.

Closure

But in "The Pianist," he may have achieved a closure of sorts. The finale of Szpilman's odyssey is itself the very sort of Hollywood ending that Polanski would have jeered at—except it's all true, in a stranger-than-fiction way.



ADRIEN Brody in a scene from "The Pianist"



ROMAN Polanski receives his Palme D'Or in the 2002 Cannes festival.

What ultimately saves Szpilman is the unexpected mercy of a German captain by the name of Wilm Hosenfeld (Thomas Kretschmann, a terrific actor), who discovers the pianist hiding like a rat in an empty house.

Asked to play something on an abandoned piano, Szpilman, tentatively at first and then giving in to the roar of three years of extreme deprivation and terror pounding in his ear, pours everything out in a fiery, breathtaking performance of a Chopin piece.

It sounds too neat a dramatic highlight, but incredibly, something stirs in the officer's heart to make him decide to hide and feed Szpilman until war's end. Perhaps great art does transform even the blackest of hearts.

In any case, equating a love of art with moral rectitude is a dubious point. Hitler himself sought the mythic moorings of his Aryan-domination dreams in the music of Wagner. And this was the same Germany that gave birth to Bach, Beethoven and Goethe. Art, as the war showed, was no barrier to barbarism.

Hosenfeld's one act of decency in a vast landscape of unspeakable cruelty will go down in history as one of those bizarre, unfathomable impulses of the human heart, random and mysterious.

Szpilman, to the end, seemed the object of some divine burlesque. That he survived was not mainly due to courage or an enormous will to live, but to luck.

Restrained

As it is, that may be the reason "The Pianist" is a much-restrained film. It moves like a formal old-style movie, devoid of dramatics, refusing at every turn to win us over with easy sentiment.

Szpilman himself is presented as neither a particularly heroic nor sympathetic character. Like most survivors of the war, he wasn't an outsize figure with audacious tales to tell to validate his survival. He got by on bewildering chance and accident—exactly the story of Polanski's own survival.

The very manner by which he approached these parallel memories indicates the full circle that making "The Pianist" has given Polanski. After 20 years of creative rut, he seems an artist reborn.

Gone is the bleak, bitter drollness of his youth. In its place is now an unforced sobriety, a vision dedicated to the hard-won truth and to the rigorous memorializing of details that add up to a harrowing, and ultimately liberating, sense of authenticity in his art.

Given what he's been through, Polanski has earned the right to make the definitive movie about the Holocaust. And he has.

E-mail the author at gibbs@100.ph

Pinay-Sex.com'

From page F1

are much more cost-conscious and prone to proven formulas.

The most compelling reason for going DV, of course, is cost. Compared to the typical Filipino movie studio production budget of P8-P9 million (P11 million if you include the prints and marketing expenses), shooting in digital only costs a fraction.

"It's the best technology in the world for the Third World filmmaker," declares Aguiluz. "Look at this technology as the perfect tool for Pinoy filmmakers at the moment."

Digital all the way

Indeed, it is a powerful tool. And an increasingly superior one at that. But admittedly, film, particularly 35-mm, still sets the standard. "There's nothing like it," Aguiluz says.

TIKOY Aguiluz at work

Aguiluz takes digital adoption a step further by launching a digital campaign for "Pinay-Sex.com." "We're doing our own campaign using technology."

His webmaster, Rolando "Yuka" Eucasion (who plays Franco, a deranged—what else?—webmaster in the movie), created a website (www.pinay-sex.com) that looks like a typical porn site.

Redemption?

So, is digital the future of cinema? It seems so. "All our neighbors are doing it," Aguiluz states, "no one's shooting 16-mm anymore, except documentaries." He adds, "That's where it is, whether we like it or not, we're already here."

Aguiluz is, without a doubt, a digital convert. "For me, it's like the discovery of fire," describing the impact and implications of digital video. He says that's his state of the mind at the moment, "I can't think of doing a 35-mm [film] unless it's an epic movie with a big budget."

Asked if Pinay-sex.com will set a trend toward more commercial filmmakers getting into digital, Aguiluz replies, "I hope so, if it makes money."

But Aguiluz, albeit working on a small budget, is not a man of small ambitions. His body of work and contributions to cinema are a testament to his influence.

Will DV finally break the horrible cycle-high production costs force producers to make low-quality movies, which result in poor theater attendance?

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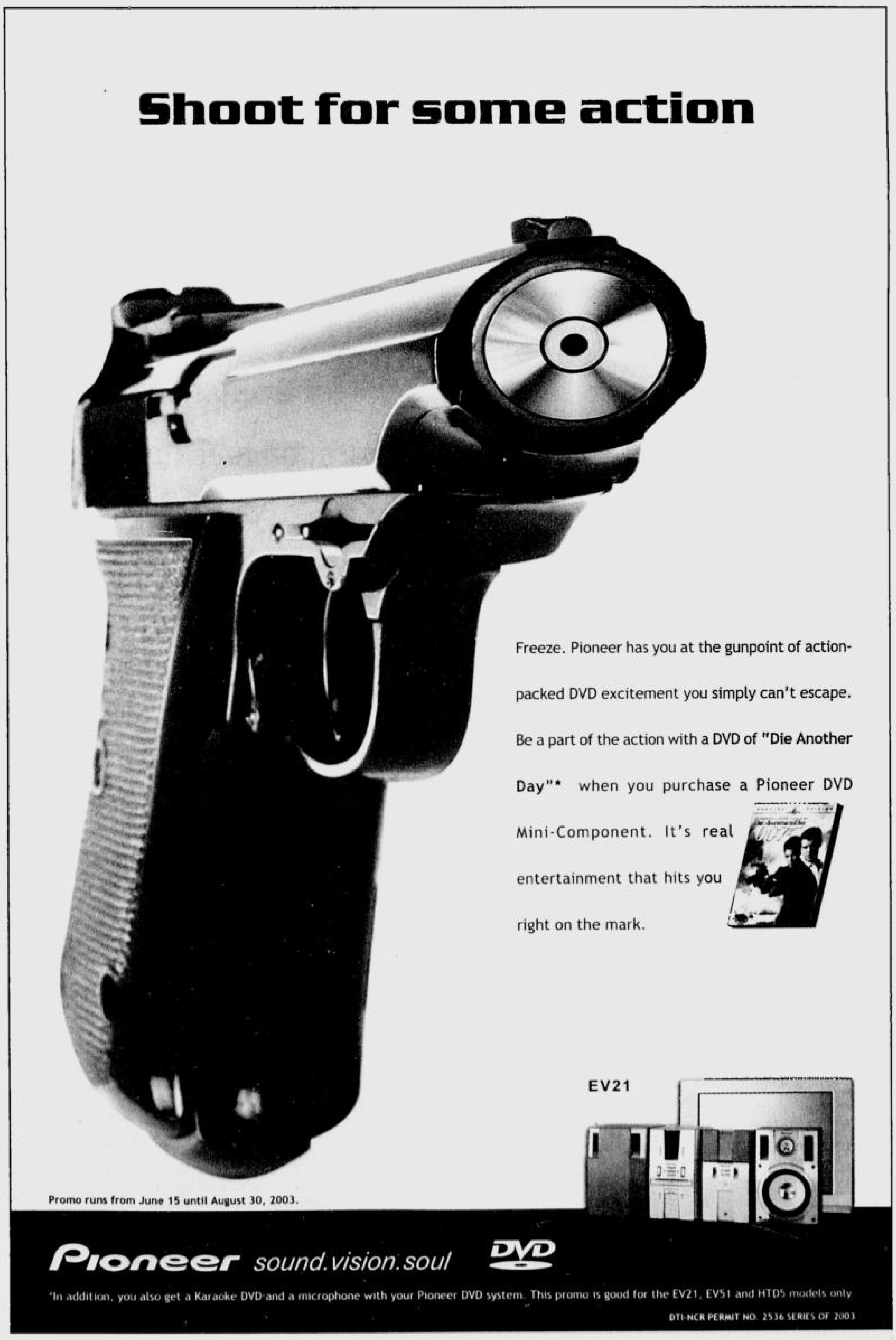

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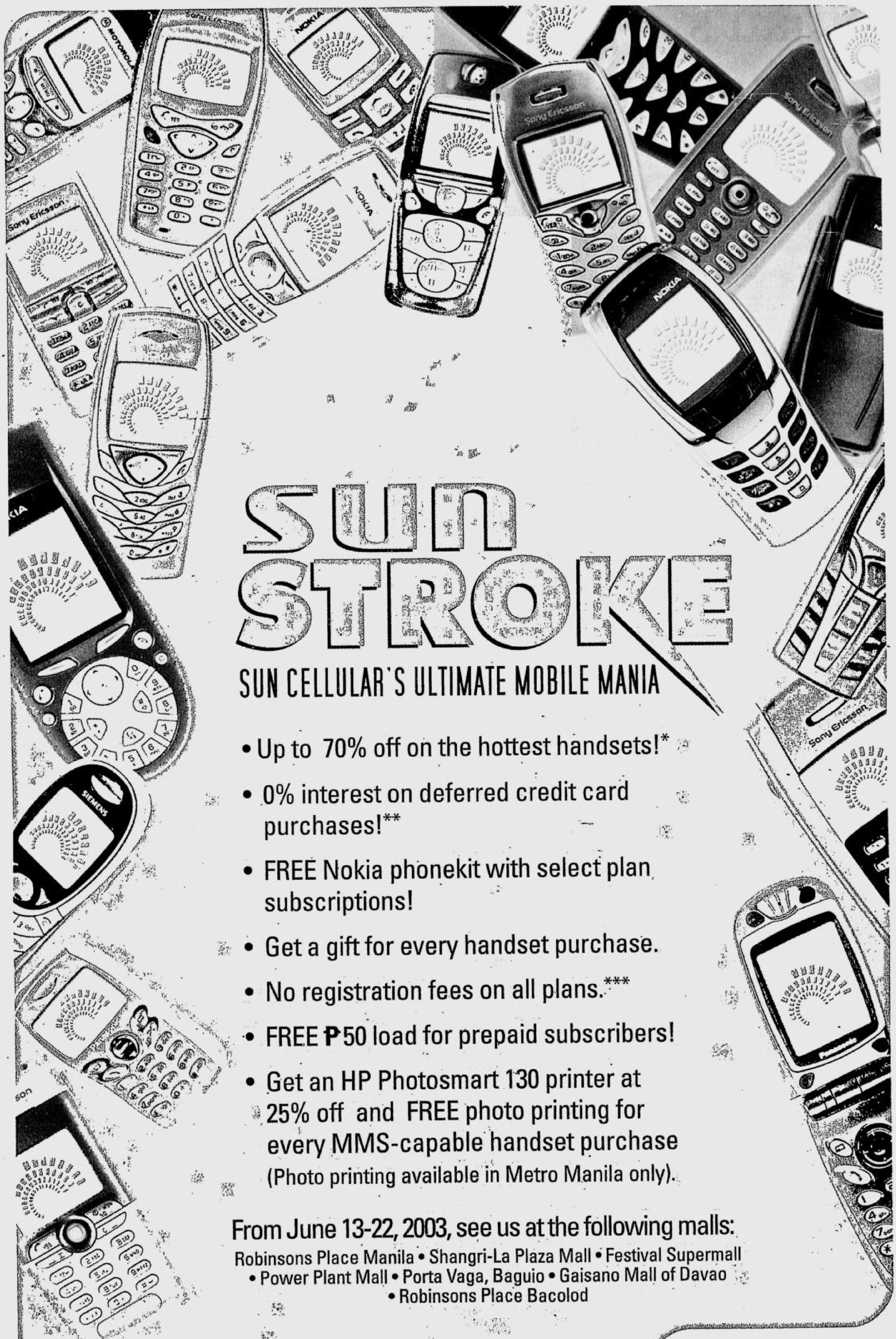

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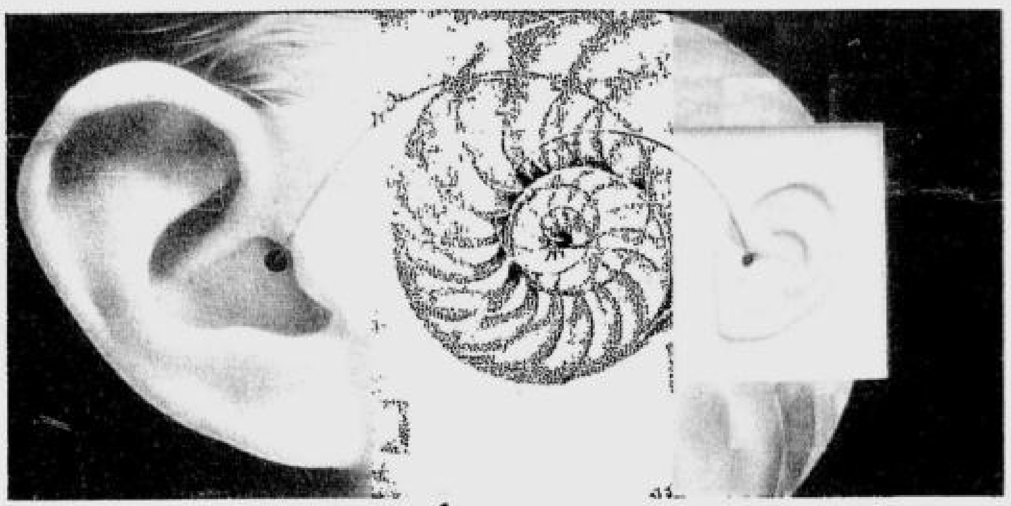

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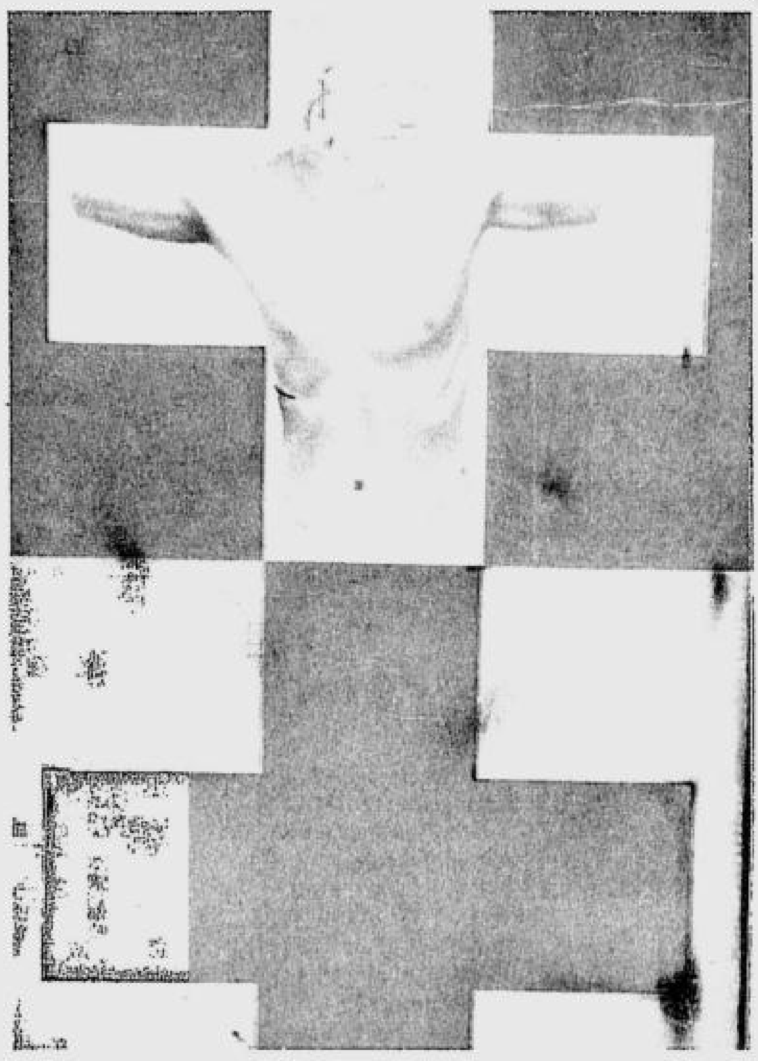


"DOUBLE Cross"

Ode to the body in particular

By Constantino C. Tejero

FOR SHEER draftsmanship, Ronald Ventura's work is nothing less than amazing. Each subject is depicted with that minute and impersonal exactitude of detail characteristic of the style variously called photorealism, hyperrealism and superrealism.

Witness his exhibit "X²" consisting of 12 artworks in oil, acrylic and mixed media, ongoing until June 17 in two galleries.

Five of the pieces are in Big & Small Art Co. at the Artwalk, 4/L, SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City.

Seven pieces are installed in West Gallery, 3/L, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City.

As the exhibit's title suggests, the motif here is the double, graphically (quite literally) illustrated by mirror images. The artist intends to plumb the human psyche through various perspectives, from the visionary to the banal.

From the early works where the color tones are softly blended, Ventura's images have fully evolved into ones characterized by sharp-focus detail, high-resolution as it were.

"Before, my colors were realistic," he says. "For the skin, skin tone *talaga*."

Now, specifically in this exhibit, it is monochromatic: black, white, gray, and some brown and red. The more chromatic early works have unsettlingly dark tones and quirky composition, while the monochromatic new works have formal symmetry and approach luminism.

He traces this to the fact that he used to live in an old house, thus producing the rusty background of his early paintings. Now that he has transferred to a new house with white walls...

Here, context is everything. Ventura cites as example that if an artist lives in the Arctic he sees nothing but white, so he'll paint all white.

This, he says, explains the respective styles and techniques of the abstractionist and the figurative artist. It's just different ways of seeing things, and the resultant artwork depends on the artist's individual orientation.

Obsessive image

He focuses on the human figure, he says, as to him it represents life and human activity. This borders on an obsessiveness with the human body and its parts, particularly the male nude. If ever he includes anything else on the canvas, these are simple objects and the austere background.

"Before, they used the body only for studying anatomy or drawing, but not as major subject for Filipino artists," he says. "And to me, the male is more symbolic of power than the female, in our society, in politics, especially in this macho culture."

His rendering of the human body may look anatomically correct, but he admits it is idealized. Not the way Lucian Freud, for example, would record the nuances of the human flesh.

Ventura uses photography as bases for his images, but the sinews and muscles and lighting have been retouched during the transfer from photograph to canvas.

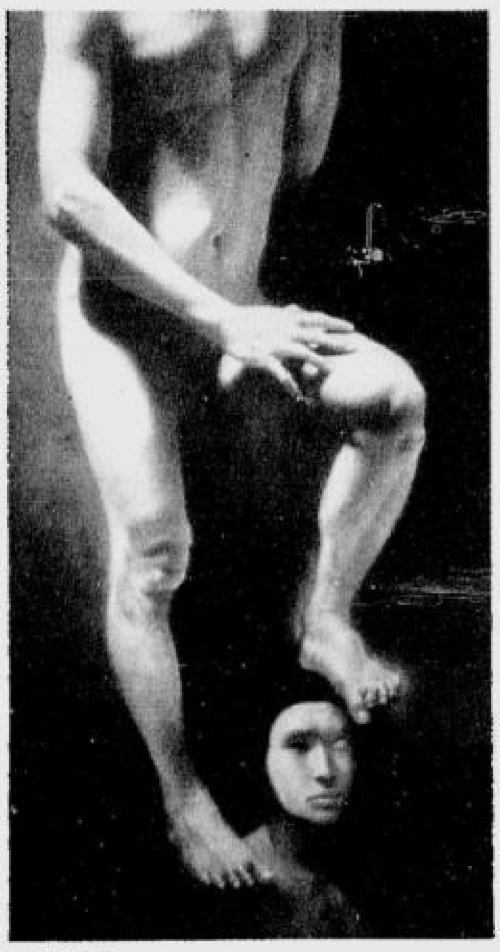
The result shows utmost virtuosity. Consider the pieces "Rights" and "Crossed," and see if you wouldn't mistake them for blown-up photos.

The artist says the original photo on which a piece is based is somewhat blurry, but he carefully applies each delicate line and soft smudge to produce that incredible detail showing every crease and pore and crinkle of the human skin.

This is certainly hard work. Ventura says he spends a week in execution on a big painting, from drawing to glazing, if he works 8-12 hours a day.

The description of luminism—as "a polished and meticulous realism where there's no sign of brushwork and no trace of impressionism, the atmospheric effects achieved by infinitely careful gradations of tone, the most exact study of the relative clarity of near and far objects, and a precise rendering of the variations in texture and color produced by

ODE/ G2



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MABINI ☎ 525.1474	GIFTED MIND FAT 16/M.CIRCUIT	NO ENTRANCE FEE
MALATE ☎ 521.8143	POWER SURGE MR. ROXY	NO ENTRANCE FEE
NOVALICHES ☎ 936.9757	ICE KENDI BEAT BOX	BLAKDYAK ALL FRIDAY'S OF JUNE
BIÑAN ☎ (049)511.7268	MIXED-UP MISSMO	NO ENTRANCE FEE
TIA MARIA'S	TIA MARIA'S	TIA MARIA'S
JUPITER ☎ 890.4735	TONE WORKS 3RD DEGREE	NO ENTRANCE FEE
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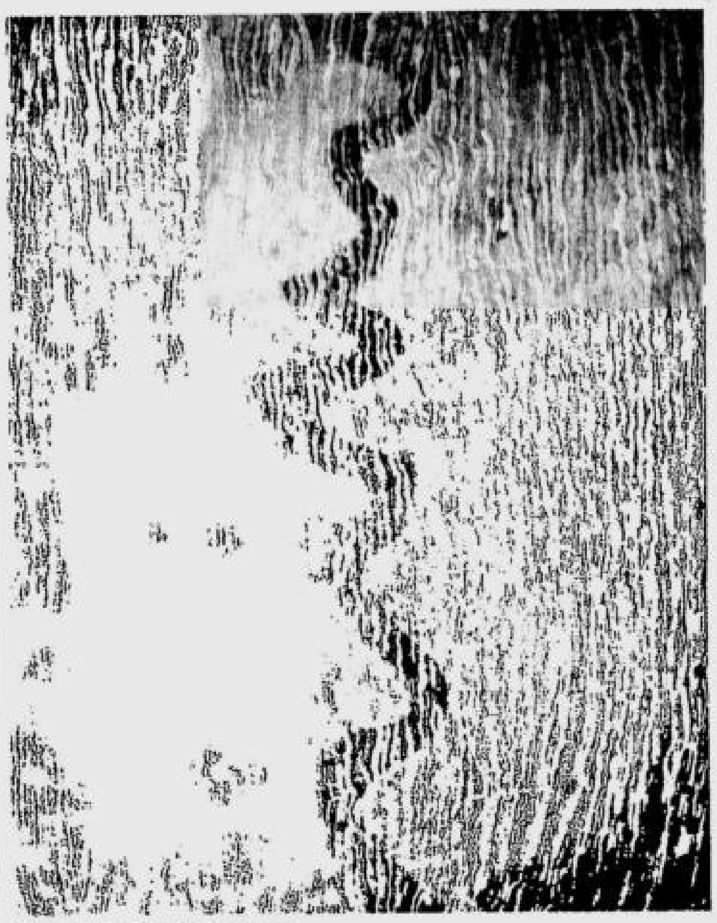
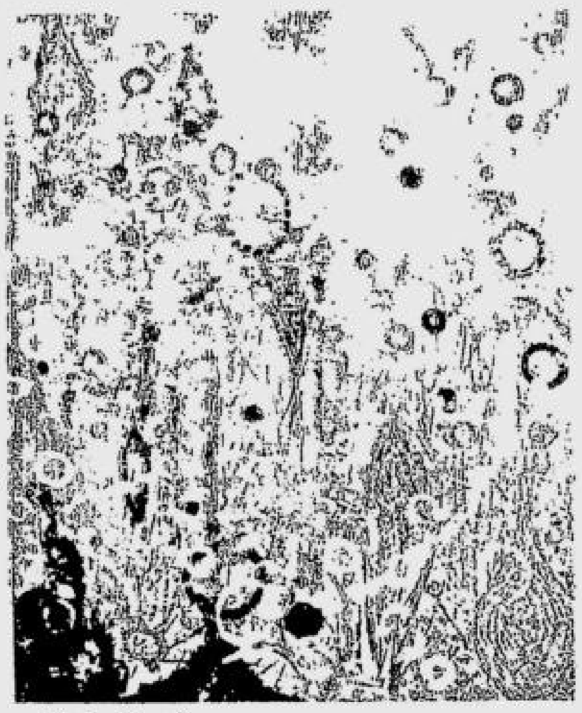
'Left Climate' brings together 2 top abstractionists



"RAIN" by Pardo de Leon



"DAPHNE Series No. 3" by Popo San Pascual

PARDO de Leon and Popo San Pascual are holding a joint exhibit of their most recent oil-on-canvas abstract works, "Left Climate," at the Mag:net Gallery.

"Left Climate" was inspired by the landmark essay of American formalist art critic Clement Greenberg, "Avant Garde and Kitsch."

The two artists periodically use abstraction to express nuances and sensations derived from contemporary life. The works belong to a tradition of Philippine abstraction that derives its sensibilities from organic forms.

While De Leon has large-scale figurative works, San Pascual's are small-scale.

The two are graduates of Studio Arts (major in Painting) of the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts. They both received the Cultural Center of the Philippines Thirteen Artists Awards in 1988.

They also went to Italy together for a two-month painting grant from the Fundaccion Cuffura/e ffalo Svedese.

"Left Climate" runs until June 21 at the Mag:net Gallery, at the Loop, ELJ Center, ABS-CBN Compound, Eugenio Lopez Jr. Street, QC. Call 410-0995 (Malou) or e-mail magnet@info.com.ph.

Ode to the body in particular

From page G1

direct or reflected rays"—certainly applies to Ventura's technique.

See, for instance, a piece like "Communication" for this distinct depiction of light and that hallucinatory precision of detail.

Symbols and vision

But his style is not photographic naturalism, as behind it are actually careful composition and strange juxtapositions that produce a strong feeling of unreality. Which would make these images products of magical realism (a phrase, by the way, coined in the 1920s by a German critic to apply to painting, not to literature).

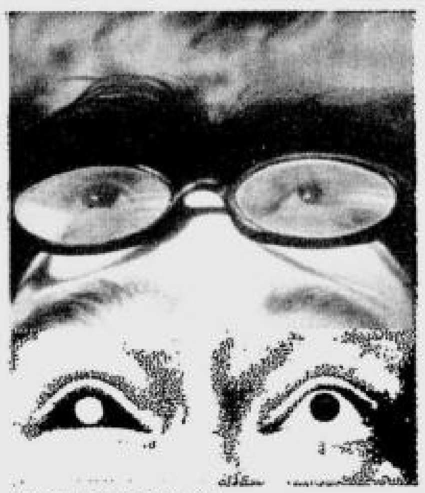
That's as close a description as can be of Surrealism, to which Ventura truly belongs. His favorite artists, in fact, are leading exponents of that movement: Magritte and Paul Delvaux.

"These are the artists *na malakas ang* impact *sa akin*," he says.

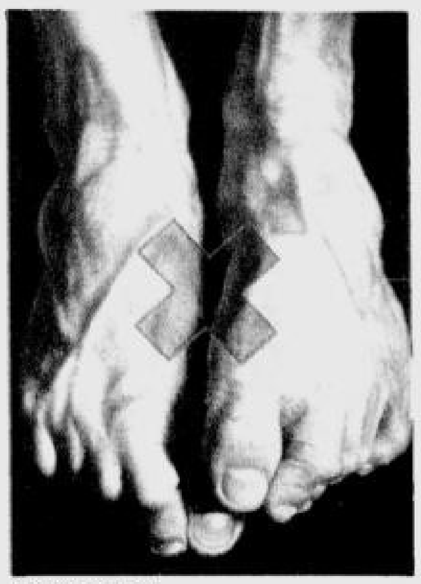
But he also admires Duchamp, Antonio Austria (for his conceptualization and composition), Danny Dalena ("powerful images"), Boogie Ruiz ("Evolved *ang trabaho n'ya*").

The large mixed-media work "Double Cross" shows that Ventura is no mere draftsman, either. Here he delivers a searing social commentary using that common symbol of faith, the cross, doubled on the canvas in flat planes of beige and red.

Contained in one cross is a chalky figure of the ostensibly crucified Christ, limbless, the face a Hellenic mask. The artist shows metal rods connecting the head to the torso, revealing the figure to be a graven image or a limestone icon.



"DOUBLE Vision"



"CROSSED"

The theme of Christ betrayed is emphasized by the link between the Red Cross and the lotto (illustrated by thousands of lotto ticket digits meticulously stamped on the beige planes). This betrayal of the Christian faith is confirmed by the image of the red cross that could be seen as a swastika.

"Symbols are changing," says Ventura, "and so are their meanings over time."

"Double Vision" illustrates the viewing process, the various ways of seeing things in black or white, through shades or in amber light. This is also how a viewer, reader or audience sees and interprets a work of art.

"Asianic" touches on Eastern philosophy, particularly the yin-yang principle.

"*Iba pa rin ang* Asian *'pag tumingin, hindi* black-and-white *ang* vision," says the artist. "There's always something spiritual in it."

Artist's evolution

Even without the exhibit's information sheet's high-minded explication of the human psyche, though, the common viewer can still enjoy these artworks on his or her own terms. Art is also a viewer's experience, vision and interpretation.

"Vision should not be limited," the artist says. "*Iba ang* image *sa* language."

And there are what he calls his installation paintings, such as "When the Mirror Breaks," where glass shards are scattered on the floor below the artwork.

A sculptural piece mounted on a wall has a box of wood and Plexiglas (sand-papered for a blurred effect) containing a human heart of cast plaster. The piece is untitled, as the artist says what he has in mind cannot be translated.

These pieces could be part of Ventura's evolution as artist.

"All people evolve," he says. "Painting is like lifestyle."

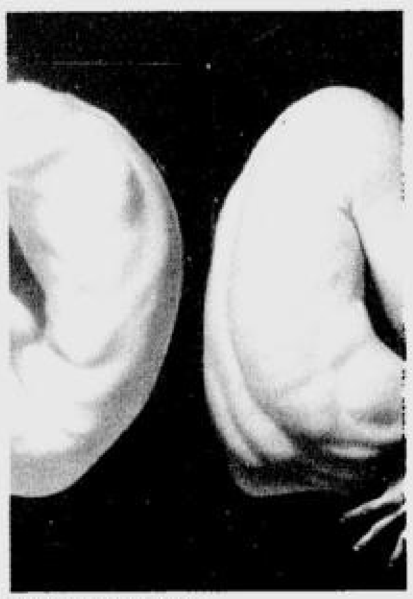
He cites as example that what was in fashion at the time of Duchamp may not be applicable today. And he cannot neglect the new technology, producing such as cyber art, which he may incorporate in his future work.

Ventura teaches graphic art, composition and thesis at the University of Santo Tomas, from where he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, major in Painting. He's on leave, and he feels like going full-time into his art.

"But there's a problem," he says. "If I leave the academe now, that might cause a gap in the development of my students."

This applies to what he has said at one time, that we can't really trace the history of Philippine art because it's discontinuous, it has often been interrupted.

"*May naiwan na hindi natuloy ng* Modernism," he says. "That's a problem in the development of art."



"BACK Squared"

Artist opens doors to her 'secret garden'

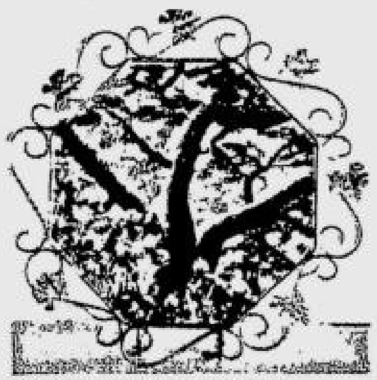
ADDIE Sycip Cukingnan cultivates a secret garden. There are calla lilies, peonies, hydrangeas, magnolias, red *banderas*, *mil flores* and even lotus.

The self-taught artist gives people a chance to see her secret garden in her solo exhibit until June 31 at the Renaissance Art Gallery off the Artwalk, SM Megamall A.

Appropriately titled, the exhibit is called "Floral Splendor." The artist is using a unique medium for her floral subjects—wrought-iron plates specially made for her.

Cukingnan has invented a way of making the metal surface absorb the oils, which also resulted in the use of less paint. The decorative plates come in oval, rectangular and hexagonal shapes bordered with intricate curlicues. They can stand on their own, thus making the painting less expensive than those on canvasses that have to be framed.

Noli Romero, curator of the Renaissance Art Gallery, have put the art pieces on pedestals to better showcase Cukingnan's "Floral Splendor," Among the pieces on exhibit at her show are "Calla Lilies Abloom," "Peony in Bloom" and "Blue Hydrangeas."



"BLOOMS in the Shade"

The artist drew inspiration from the masters, specifically Dali, Degas, Gauguin.

Before this solo show, Cukingnan had joined twice-a-year exhibits of Arte Pintura, a group of artists, which she joined in 1997. Aside from being a painter, Cukingnan is also co-chief executive officer, with her sister Grace, of the Kitaro Japanese food-to-go chain, which their brother Jimmy started.

She is mother to three girls and wife to Alexander Cukingnan, an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist.

Call 637-3101.

CUKINGNAN at work

Manalang's 'experiments' at West; jeepney story at InterCon; UFO takes flight

VISUAL ARTS

PEP Manalang experiments with a more intuitive approach in her latest exhibit of 10 works on paper, "Brush Mind." Manalang uses dry brush strokes and watery acrylic washes, as well as some impasto, in the abstract works. West Gallery is on the 3/L Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 752-7028/29.

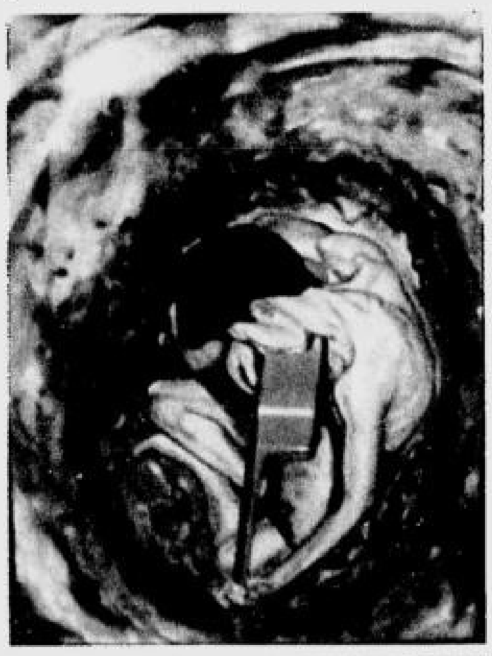
INTERCONTINENTAL Manila's lobby Art Cafe is hosting a unique art exhibit on June 17 to July 15. Titled "Kuwentong Jeepney (Jeepney Stories)," it will be a mixed media visual narrative of the Philippine jeepney and its passengers. Participating artists are Ral Arrogante, Aris Bagtas, Manuel Baldemor, Elmer Borlongan, Karlota Isla Contreras, Manny Garibay, Danny Pangan, Jose Tence Ruiz, Fidel Sarmiento and Boy Ventura. Alberto Avellana is curator. Part of the proceeds from the sale will go to InterContinental Manila's community projects.

"INADEQUATE," a lamp Johnny Alcazaren made from wood, copper and plastic, at UFO

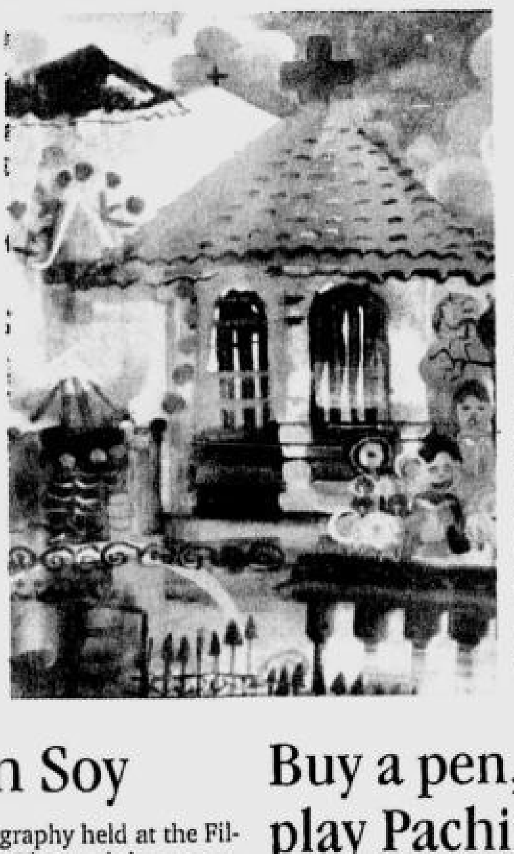
OBJETS d'art and the most innovative forms of functional art are now available at UFO, a gallery cum art-space center that seeks to redefine the boundaries of design and taste. UFO is located at 150 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati City. Call 899-2704 or (0917) 925-7367.

AS part of the French Spring in Manila, the French embassy with the Alliance Française, is holding "La Ruche," an exhibition by French contemporary artist Philippe Lagautriere. The exhibit also displays some of the works of famous writers who frequented La Ruche (French for "beehive"), a building originally set up by Gustave Eiffel, after whom one of France's enduring landmarks is named, which is a network of workshops for artists.

ARTIST RM de Leon is unveiling his "Diary" series in a show titled "Unexhibited Works" at Finale Art Gallery in SM Megamall June 17-29. Painted in 1987, the series constitutes an important chapter in De Leon's development as an artist.



ARTHUR de la Cruz will hold his first one-man exhibit, "Breath of the Spirit," today at 6 p.m. at the University of Santo Tomas Museum of Arts and Sciences (UST Main Building). Cutting the ribbon are former United Architects of the Philippines president Yolanda Reyes and television director Al Quinn. Show runs until July 11.



TOP Cebu artist Anthony Fermin will open his first Manila exhibit with cocktails on June 21 at 4 p.m. at the Syano Art Link (19 Shanghai St., Better Living, Parañaque). Shown at left is "Bisperas," mixed media. Exhibit will run for a month.

Black-and-whites at Café Juan Soy

ELEVEN individuals coming from different fields, who share a common passion for black-and-white photography, have put together a group work titled "Retrotista," a photo exhibit which runs at Café Juan Soy in Greenbelt 1 until June 30.

The exhibit is Café Juan Soy's farewell treat before it moves to a new location in July in the same mall. The transfer is in response to patrons' numerous requests for a more intimate and cozy ambiance for future events and exhibits.

"Retrotista" (coined from the words "retratista" and "retro") will feature 22 black-and-white photos with varied subjects. The exhibit culminates a six-day workshop on black-and-white photography held at the Filipinas Heritage Library. The workshops were conducted by EyeAsia, which is dedicated to the propagation, understanding and appreciation of Philippine art and culture through photography. Kat Palasi, a graduate of the International Center of Photography in New York, and Vir Montecastro, a photo consultant facilitated the workshop.

Participating photographers are Nieves B. Alvarez, Johanna Boestel, Emily Bomasang, Darwin G. Chiong, Mariann Africa-de Dios, Margie Lopa-Perez,Rhoda Ramos, Valee ManzoRivas, Chinqui Roldan, Dino B. Romano and Bernadette Tamayo.

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Promo runs until June 29.

New gallery indicates thriving art scene

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

WITH NEW galleries opening recently, the art scene promises to be livelier, offering incontrovertible proof that art best thrives amid economic uncertainty.

The latest addition to the gallery roster, Renaissance Gallery, is owned and operated by Noli and Agnes Romero, a husband-and-wife partnership that previously ran a flourishing high-end jewelry business for 16 years. The lure of art must have proved irresistible, particularly to Noli who has been enamored with art since grade school.

Those impressionable years, Romero recalls, he spent being awed by the works of Juvenal Sansó and Carlos "Botong" Francisco, particularly so since the latter's works adorned the school's chapel. He, too, had dreamed of pursuing an art course in college, but his father did not allow it, and the aspiring artist ended up finishing political science at Far Eastern University instead.

After college, Romero first worked as a stock market broker, then moved to the late Makati Mayor Nemesio Yabut's think tank, and later tried his luck in commodities trading, before finally settling in the jewelry business. It was here that the couple met choice clientele who not only wanted jewelry but art as well for blue-chip investment.

Romero recalls buying a Manansala in 1989, his first purchase, which he resold five years later for a hefty profit. This was followed by a buying spree—a staggering record of 22 pieces bought from one seller—which had been consigned to her *bodega*. This was, to him, a turning point in his professional life, a move that would set him off into reconsidering a new career as art dealer.

"In my desire to formally learn the trade, I enrolled at UP for a crash course in the fine arts," he says, having been prodded by artist-friend, Gig de Pio, to keep himself up-to-date in the business. This came after the couple decided to close down the jewelry business.

Indeed, with his stable of contacts from his jewelry business, Romero went on to strike one art deal after another.

Best-selling Sansó

Easily, the bestseller is Sansó. "I must have sold 200 Sansós," he says. He also sold several works by Joya, who became more saleable after his death in 1995. He also had direct access to the first-stringer Pinoy artists—from Manansala to Kiukok—as well as perennial favorites like Zalameda and BenCab.

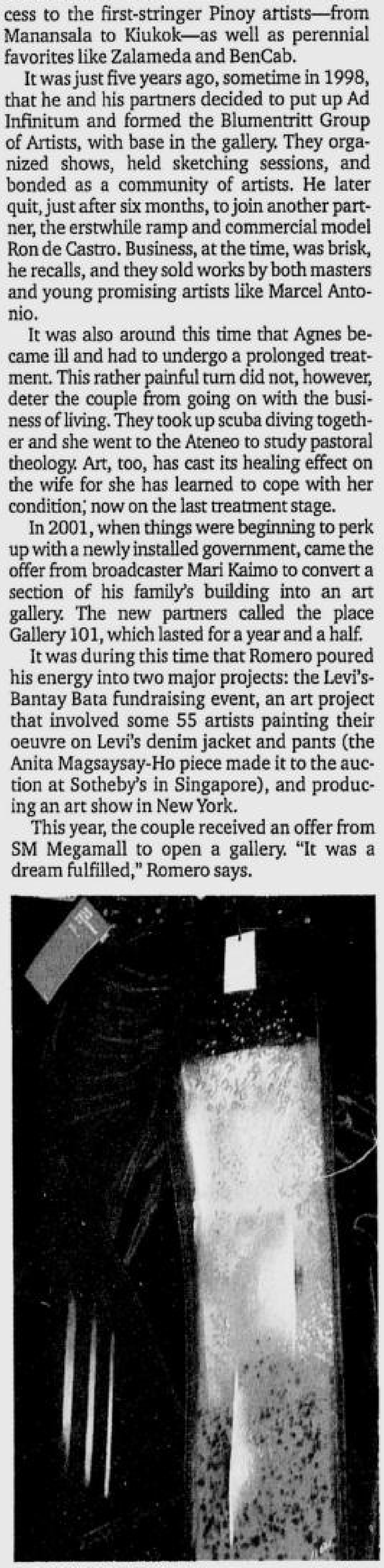
It was just five years ago, sometime in 1998, that he and his partners decided to put up Ad Infinitum and formed the Blumentritt Group of Artists, with base in the gallery. They organized shows, held sketching sessions, and bonded as a community of artists. He later quit, just after six months, to join another partner, the erstwhile ramp and commercial model Ron de Castro. Business, at the time, was brisk, he recalls, and they sold works by both masters and young promising artists like Marcel Antonio.

It was also around this time that Agnes became ill and had to undergo a prolonged treatment. This rather painful turn did not, however, deter the couple from going on with the business of living. They took up scuba diving together and she went to the Ateneo to study pastoral theology. Art, too, has cast its healing effect on the wife for she has learned to cope with her condition; now on the last treatment stage.

In 2001, when things were beginning to perk up with a newly installed government, came the offer from broadcaster Mari Kaimo to convert a section of his family's building into an art gallery. The new partners called the place Gallery 101, which lasted for a year and a half.

It was during this time that Romero poured his energy into two major projects: the Levi's-Bantay Bata fundraising event, an art project that involved some 55 artists painting their oeuvre on Levi's denim jacket and pants (the Anita Magsaysay-Ho piece made it to the auction at Sotheby's in Singapore), and producing an art show in New York.

This year, the couple received an offer from SM Megamall to open a gallery. "It was a dream fulfilled," Romero says.



A PAINTING by Eghai Fernandez on Levi's denim pants for the Bantay Bata project

NOLI and Agnes Romero

RENAISSANCE

THE FACADE of the Renaissance Gallery on the 4/F Art Walk, SM Megamall

Though it has already opened, Renaissance will be formally opened this month, with a show of Filipino modern masters and young achievers. Also slated this month is Addle Cukingnan, with a show of her floral splendors done on specially-designed wrought iron plates.

What sets the gallery apart is the unusual size of its ceiling, which, at 12 ft, is 4 ft higher than most galleries, prompting an artist to call it artist-friendly.

"This is the spirit that the gallery will take on, its doors open to the old and the young alike, the established and those just about to break into the scene, in a fraternal bonding so vital to art today."

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

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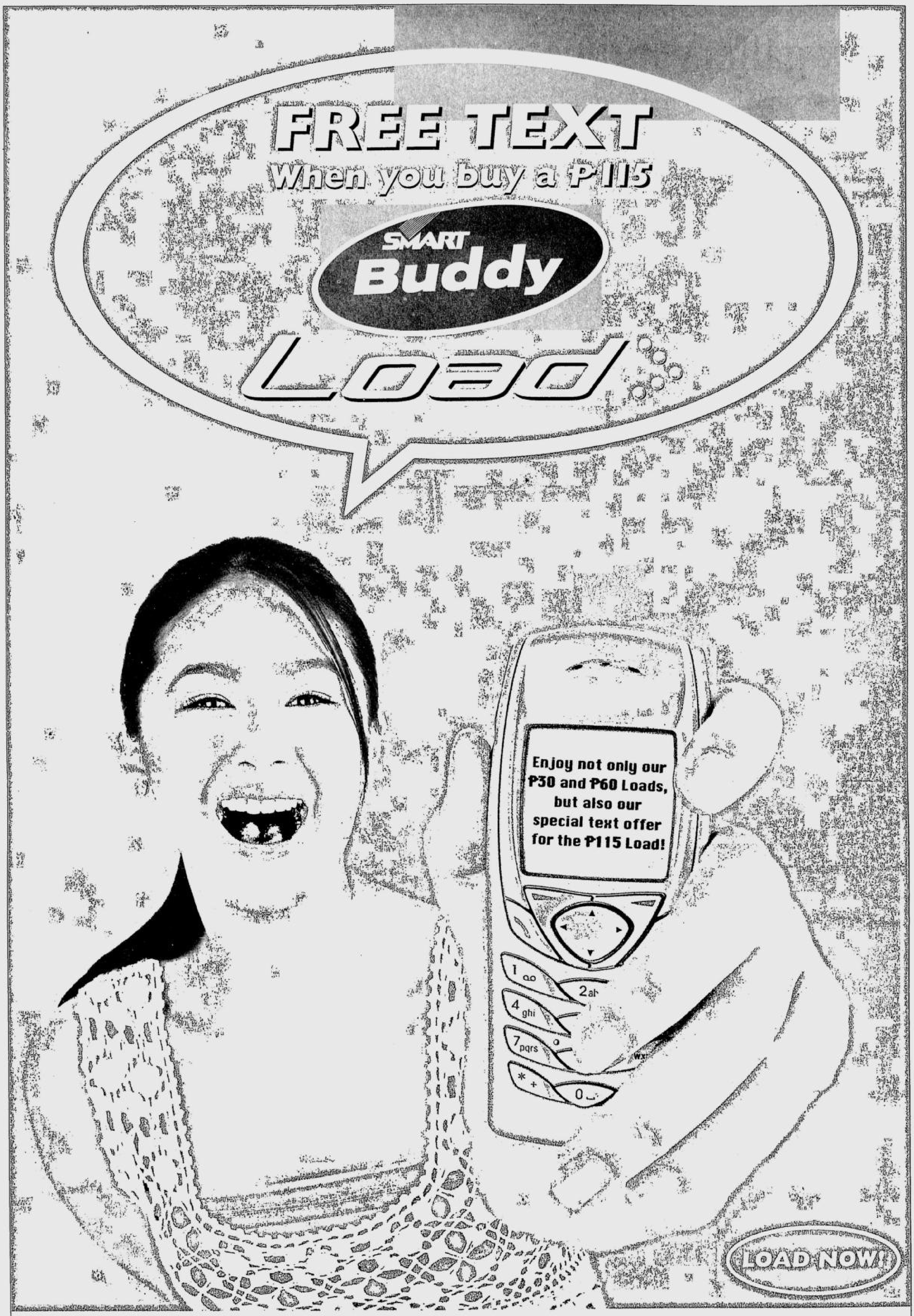
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